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POEMS

AND

PROSE WRITINGS.

BY

RICHARD HENRY DANA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

NEW YORK:
BAKER AND SCRIBNER.
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PREFACE.

The first of these volumes includes all that was in the former edition of Poems and Prose Writings, with the addition to the Poems of a few short pieces. That edition contained all that was in the small volume of Poems published in 1827. For particulars respecting this last-mentioned volume, the reader is referred to its Preface, here republished.

To the prose of this first volume I have restored its old title, The Idle Man. Of the work under that title, published in New York in 1821–22, The Writer of the Idle Man to his Old Friends will tell my readers as much as they will care to know.

The Contents to the second volume show when and in what works the Essays first appeared. Of the remaining articles, this information is given at the beginning of each.

I have republished most of my Reviews, mainly because I thought there was a probability that, if I did not, some one would when I was gone. In anticipating this, and revising these articles for the press, I believe I have done no more than my duty to myself. In the revision I have made slight changes, but have not felt at liberty to do any thing that would affect the general character of the Reviews: had I so felt, I might, perhaps, have freed them from many faults. The only changes which, it seems to me, are of importance enough to be partic-

ularly mentioned, — and these take the character of extension, or growth, rather than of superaddition, — are those in the review of Hazlitt, which are spoken of at the head of that article.

And this reminds me, that what is there said respecting Hazlitt's productions and literary rank after that review was written, is equally applicable to Mr. Irving and the review of The Sketch Book. For although Mr. Irving was better known when the review of him appeared, and more highly estimated both at home and abroad than was Mr. Hazlitt in our country when the article on his Lectures was published, Mr. Irving has also gone on rising in reputation, and giving proofs of the variety, strength, and beauty of his mind. Besides this, he has revised his works, bringing to the revision the helps of long-matured thought and taste. The review of The Sketch Book, therefore, is preserved more for the sake of conformity with my general purpose, and for the historical interest it may possess, than for any applicability to the works of Mr. Irving at this time.

In the Reviews much is said upon the state of American literature, and the notions then more or less prevalent about literature and literary men, which must have a strange aspect to those who have grown up since they were written. Yet it is as true as things of so general a character usually can be. With this in mind, they should be read as a part of our literary history. If looked at in this light, I may be allowed to say, they will be deserving of some attention, and in it will probably be found to lie their chief interest to people of this day. For in the changes which the literary world has undergone within the last thirty years, much that was once held to be presumptuous novelty (though in fact only restoration) must now be looked upon as little better than commonplace.

Boston, November 1, 1849.

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POEMS.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE POEMS.

It is not without hesitation that I give this small volume to the public; for no one can be more sensible than I am how much is necessary to the production of what may be rightly called poetry. It is true that something resembling it is oftentimes borne into instant and turbulent popularity, while a work of genuine character may be lying neglected by all except the poets. But the tide of time flows on, and the former begins to settle to the bottom, while the latter rises slowly and steadily to the surface, and moves forward, for a spirit is in it.

It is a poor ambition to be anxious after the distinction of a day in that which, if it be fit to live at all, is to live for ages. It is wiser than all, so to love one's art that its distinctions shall be but secondary: and, indeed, he who is not so absorbed in it as to think of his fame only as one of its accidents had better save himself his toil; for the true power is not in him. Yet the most self-dependent are stirred to livelier action by the hope of fame, and there are none who can go on with vigour, without the sympathy of some few minds which they respect.

I will not say of my first tale, as Miss Edgeworth sometimes does of her improbabilities, "This is a fact"; but thus much I may say: there are few facts so well vouched for, and few truths so fully believed in, as the account upon which I have grounded my story.

I shall not name the island off our New England coast upon

which these events happened, and these strange appearances were seen; for islanders are the most sensitive creatures in the world in all that relates to their places of abode.

I have changed the time of the action — which was before the war of our Revolution — to that of the great contest in Spain; as the reader will see, in my making use of the Christian name of Lord Wellington in a way to allude to the popular belief, during the early ages, in the return of King Arthur to the world. — In putting my hero on horseback, in not allowing him to die quietly in his bed, and, indeed, in whatever I thought might heighten the poetical effect of the tale, I have not hesitated to depart from the true account. Nor am I even certain that I have not run two stories into one; it being many years since these wonderful events were told to me. I mention this here, lest the islanders might be unnecessarily provoked at my departures from the real facts, when they come to read my tale, and the critics be put to the trouble of useless research in detecting mistakes.

Of the second story I would only say, that, having in it nothing of the marvellous, and being of a less active character than the first, I shall not be disappointed though it should fail of being generally estimated according to its relative merit.

Of the remaining pieces, the first four have appeared in the New York Review, and are here republished with the consent of my friend Bryant, who was the editor of that late work; — The Husband and Wife's Grave, The Dying Raven, Fragment of an Epistle, and The Little Beach-Bird. The others are, A Clump of Daisies, The Pleasure-Boat, and Daybreak.

One of these, "Fragment of an Epistle," is taken from a letter which I wrote to amuse myself while recovering from a severe illness. I must be pardoned giving it as a fragment. The lines are much more broken than is usual in the octosyllabic verse, though Milton has taken great liberties in this respect in his two exquisite little poems in the same measure. This he could have done neither through ignorance nor carelessness. Lord Byron has justly spoken of "the fatal facility"

of this measure ; and he might as truly have remarked upon its fatal monotony, unless varied in all possible ways. So far from abrupt pauses not being allowable in it, there is scarcely a measure in the language which becomes so wearisome without them ; as every one must have experienced in reading Scott, notwithstanding his rapidity and spirit.

I am fully aware of the truth of Sir Walter Raleigh's remark in the Preface to his History of the World : — " True it is, that the judgements of all men are not agreeable ; nor (which is more strange) the affection of any one man stirred up alike with examples of like nature : But every one is touched most with that which most nearly seemeth to touch his own private ; or otherwise best suiteth with his apprehension." I therefore do not look to see all pleased, — content if enough are gratified to encourage me to undertake something more than this small beginning ; which is of size sufficient, if it should fail to be thought well of, and large enough to build further upon, should it be liked. Let me end, then, in the words of old Cowell : — " That which a man saith well is not to be rejected because he hath some errours. No man, no book, is void of imperfections. And, therefore, reprehend who will in God's name, that is with sweetness and without reproach."

CAMBRIDGE, 1827.

PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE POEMS.

Although the additions here made to the first edition of the Poems are considerable, yet being in their poetical characteristics essentially the same, I will stop to make only a remark or two upon the principal of them, — "Factitious Life."

Looking at the more serious cast of thought which it gradually takes, and particularly at the religious character of the close, some may think it would have been more self-consistent had there been less of a light manner and homely familiarity at the setting out.

It would hardly have been more natural, however; for, open our eyes where we may, they soon fall on the homely or trifling; and as I did not aim at form, but simply at following on after life, making some passing observations and such reflections as might flow from them, if tried by these, the poem will be found, I believe, in agreement with the run of circumstances, and congruous in itself.

The objection of others may lie against the close, as of too serious a character to grow naturally out of the rest; for I am aware of the influence that the habitual course of our feelings and associations has over the perceptions; and that, contrary to the course of them in this poem, the thoughts of men are too apt to run from the serious to the light: I am sorry for it.

In fine, there is no want of congruity in a reflecting mind, if, having first chanced upon the trifling, it falls gradually into

the serious, and at last rests in that which should be the home of all our thoughts, the religious.

The alterations now made in the poems of the first edition are of too minute a kind to deserve particular mention. Some of them were introduced in consequence of remarks which I occasionally met with in the public notices. Nor have I distinguished between those which were made in a friendly and those made in a detracting spirit. Not to avail one's self of the suggestions of a friend argues a wilful pertinacity, and to refuse to gather good out of the censoriousness of an enemy savours of folly.

Though it ill becomes an honest man to bestow public commendation through mere personal partiality, yet fairly intentioned public praise affects him who receives it like an act of personal kindness. Within the last few years I have had cause to feel this deeply; and without affecting humility, let me add, that, if attended with any pain, it has been from that sense of unworthiness which commendation oftentimes occasions.

CAMBRIDGE, 1833.

THE BUCCANEER.

Boy with thy blac berd,
I rede that thou blin,
And sone set the to shrive,
With sorrow of thi syn;

Ze met with the merchandes
And made them ful bare;
It es gude reason and right
That ze evill misfare.

For when ze stode in sowre strenkith,
Ze war all to stout.

LAURENCE MINOT.

THE island lies nine leagues away.
Along its solitary shore,
Of craggy rock and sandy bay,
No sound but ocean's roar,
Save where the bold, wild sea-bird makes her home,
Her shrill cry coming through the sparkling foam.

But when the light winds lie at rest,
And on the glassy, heaving sea,
The black duck, with her glossy breast,
Sits swinging silently, —
How beautiful! no ripples break the reach,
And silvery waves go noiseless up the beach.

And inland rests the green, warm dell;
The brook comes tinkling down its side;
From out the trees the Sabbath bell
Rings cheerful, far and wide,
Mingling its sound with bleatings of the flocks,
That feed about the vale among the rocks.

Nor holy bell, nor pastoral bleat,
In former days within the vale;
Flapped in the bay the pirate's sheet;
Curses were on the gale;
Rich goods lay on the sand, and murdered men;
Pirate and wrecker kept their revels then.

But calm, low voices, words of grace,
Now slowly fall upon the ear;
A quiet look is in each face,
Subdued and holy fear;
Each motion gentle; all is kindly done.—
Come, listen how from crime the isle was won.

I.

Twelve years are gone since Matthew Lee
Held in this isle unquestioned sway;
A dark, low, brawny man was he;
His law, — "It is my way."
Beneath his thick-set brows a sharp light broke
From small gray eyes; his laugh a triumph spoke.

II.

Cruel of heart, and strong of arm,
Loud in his sport, and keen for spoil,
He little recked of good or harm,
Fierce both in mirth and toil;
Yet like a dog could fawn, if need there were;
Speak mildly, when he would, or look in fear.

III.

Amid the uproar of the storm,
And by the lightning's sharp, red glare,
Were seen Lee's face and sturdy form;
His axe glanced quick in air.
Whose corpse at morn lies swinging in the sedge?
There 's blood and hair, Matt, on thy axe's edge.

IV.

"Ask him who floats there; let him tell;
I make the brute, not man, my mark.
Who walks the cliffs, needs heed him well!
Last night was fearful dark.
Think ye the lashing waves will spare or feel?
An ugly gash! — These rocks — they cut like steel."

V.

He wiped his axe; and turning round,
Said with a cold and hardened smile,
"The hemp is saved; the man is drowned.
Will let him float awhile?
Or give him Christian burial on the strand?
He 'll find his fellows peaceful under sand."

VI.

Lee's waste was greater than his gain.
"I 'll try the merchant's trade," he thought,
"Though less the toil to kill than feign,—
Things sweeter robbed than bought.
But, then, to circumvent them at their arts!"
Ship manned, and spoils for cargo, Lee departs.

VII.

'T is fearful, on the broad-backed waves,
To feel them shake, and hear them roar:
Beneath, unsounded, dreadful caves;
Around, no cheerful shore.
Yet 'mid this solemn world what deeds are done!
The curse goes up, the deadly sea-fight 's won;—

VIII.

And wanton talk, and laughter heard,
Where sounds a deep and awful voice.
There 's awe from that lone ocean-bird:
Pray ye, when ye rejoice!
"Leave prayers to priests," cries Lee: "I 'm ruler here!
These fellows know full well whom they should fear!"

IX.

The ship works hard; the seas run high;
Their white tops, flashing through the night,
Give to the eager, straining eye
A wild and shifting light.
"Hard at the pumps! — The leak is gaining fast!
Lighten the ship! — The devil rode that blast!"

X.

Ocean has swallowed for its food
Spoils thou didst gain in murderous glee;
Matt, could its waters wash out blood,
It had been well for thee.
Crime fits for crime. And no repentant tear
Hast thou for sin? — Then wait thine hour of fear.

XI.

The sea has like a plaything tost
That heavy hull the livelong night.
The man of sin, — he is not lost:
Soft breaks the morning light.
Torn spars and sails, — her lading in the deep, —
The ship makes port with slow and labouring sweep.

XII.

Within a Spanish port she rides.
Angry and soured, Lee walks her deck.
"So, peaceful trade a curse betides? —
And thou, good ship, a wreck!
Ill luck in change! — Ho! cheer ye up, my men!
Rigged, and at sea, and, then, old work again!"

XIII.

A sound is in the Pyrenees!
Whirling and dark comes roaring down
A tide as of a thousand seas,
Sweeping both cowl and crown:
On field and vineyard, thick and red it stood;
Spain's streets and palaces are wet with blood.

XIV.

And wrath and terrour shake the land;
The peaks shine clear in watchfire lights;
Soon comes the tread of that stout band, —
Bold Arthur and his knights.
Awake ye, Merlin! Hear the shout from Spain!
The spell is broke! — Arthur is come again! —

XV.

Too late for thee, thou young, fair bride!
The lips are cold, the brow is pale,
That thou didst kiss in love and pride;
He cannot hear thy wail,
Whom thou didst lull with fondly murmured sound:
His couch is cold and lonely in the ground.

XVI.

He fell for Spain, — her Spain no more;
For he was gone who made it dear;
And she would seek some distant shore,
Away from strife and fear,
And wait amid her sorrows till the day
His voice of love should call her thence away.

XVII.

Lee feigned him grieved, and bowed him low.
'T would joy his heart, could he but aid
So good a lady in her woe,
He meekly, smoothly said.
With wealth and servants she is soon aboard,
And that white steed she rode beside her lord.

XVIII.

The sun goes down upon the sea;
The shadows gather round her home.
"How like a pall are ye to me!
My home, how like a tomb!
O, blow, ye flowers of Spain, above his head!
Ye will not blow o'er me when I am dead."

XIX.

And now the stars are burning bright;
Yet still she 's looking toward the shore
Beyond the waters black in night.
"I ne'er shall see thee more!
Ye 're many, waves, yet lonely seems your flow;
And I 'm alone, — scarce know I where I go."

XX.

Sleep, sleep, thou sad one on the sea!
The wash of waters lulls thee now;
His arm no more will pillow thee,
Thy fingers on his brow.
He is not near, to hush thee, or to save.
The ground is his, the sea must be thy grave.

XXI.

The moon comes up; the night goes on.
Why, in the shadow of the mast,
Stands that dark, thoughtful man alone?
Thy pledge! — nay, keep it fast!
Bethink thee of her youth and sorrows, Lee;
Helpless, alone, — and, then, her trust in thee.

XXII.

When told the hardships thou hadst borne,
Her words to thee were like a charm.
With uncheered grief her heart is worn;
Thou wilt not do her harm?
He looks out on the sea that sleeps in light,
And growls an oath, — "It is too still to-night!"

XXIII.

He sleeps; but dreams of massy gold
And heaps of pearl, — stretches his hands;
But hears a voice, — "Ill man, withhold!"
A pale one near him stands.
Her breath comes deathly cold upon his cheek;
Her touch is cold; he hears a piercing shriek; —

XXIV.

He wakes! — But no relentings wake
Within his angered, restless soul.
"What, shall a dream Matt's purpose shake?
The gold will make all whole.
Thy merchant trade had nigh unmanned thee, lad!
What, balk my chance because a woman's sad?"

XXV.

He cannot look on her mild eye;
Her patient words his spirit quell.
Within that evil heart there lie
The hates and fears of hell.
His speech is short; he wears a surly brow.
There 's none will hear the shriek. What fear ye now?

XXVI.

The workings of the soul ye fear;
Ye fear the power that goodness hath;
Ye fear the Unseen One ever near,
Walking his ocean path.
From out the silent void there comes a cry, —
" Vengeance is mine! Thou, murderer, too, shalt die!"

XXVII.

Nor dread of ever-during woe,
Nor the sea's awful solitude,
Can make thee, wretch, thy crime forego.
Then, bloody hand, — to blood!
The scud is driving wildly overhead;
The stars burn dim; the ocean moans its dead.

XXVIII.

Moan for the living; moan our sins, —
The wrath of man more fierce than thine.
Hark! still thy waves! — The work begins, —
Lee makes the deadly sign.
The crew glide down like shadows. Eye and hand
Speak fearful meanings through the silent band.

XXIX.

They 're gone. — The helmsman stands alone;
And one leans idly o'er the bow.
Still as a tomb the ship keeps on;
Nor sound nor stirring now.
Hush, hark! as from the centre of the deep,
Shrieks, fiendish yells! They stab them in their sleep!

XXX.

The scream of rage, the groan, the strife,
The blow, the gasp, the horrid cry,
The panting, throttled prayer for life,
The dying's heaving sigh,
The murderer's curse, the dead man's fixed, still glare,
And fear's and death's cold sweat, — they all are there.

XXXI.

On pale, dead men, on burning cheek,
On quick, fierce eyes, brows hot and damp,
On hands that with the warm blood reek,
Shines the dim cabin lamp.
Lee looked. " They sleep so sound," he, laughing, said,
" They 'll scarcely wake for mistress or for maid."

XXXII.

A crash! They force the door, — and then
One long, long, shrill, and piercing scream
Comes thrilling 'bove the growl of men.
'T is hers! — O God, redeem
From worse than death thy suffering, helpless child!
That dreadful shriek again, — sharp, sharp, and wild!

XXXIII.

It ceased. — With speed o' th' lightning's flash,
A loose-robed form, with streaming hair,
Shoots by. — A leap, — a quick, short splash!
'T is gone! — and nothing there!
The waves have swept away the bubbling tide.
Bright-crested waves, how calmly on they ride!

XXXIV.

She 's sleeping in her silent cave,
Nor hears the loud, stern roar above,
Nor strife of man on land or wave.
Young thing! her home of love
She soon has reached! Fair, unpolluted thing!
They harmed her not! — Was dying suffering?

XXXV.

O, no! — To live when joy was dead,
To go with one, lone, pining thought,
To mournful love her being wed,
Feeling what death had wrought;
To live the child of woe, nor shed a tear,
Bear kindness, and yet share not joy or fear;

XXXVI.

To look on man, and deem it strange
That he on things of earth should brood,
When all the thronged and busy range
To her was solitude, —
O, this was bitterness! Death came and pressed
Her wearied lids, and brought the sick heart rest.

XXXVII.

Why look ye on each other so,
And speak no word? — Ay, shake the head!
She 's gone where ye can never go.
What fear ye from the dead?
They tell no tales; and ye are all true men; —
But wash away that blood; then, home again!

XXXVIII.

'T is on your souls; it will not out!
Lee, why so lost? 'T is not like thee!
Come, where thy revel, oath, and shout?
" That pale one in the sea! —
I mind not blood. — But she, — I cannot tell!
A spirit was 't? — It flashed like fires of hell!

XXXIX.

" And when it passed there was no tread!
It leaped the deck. — Who heard the sound?
I heard none! — Say, what was it fled?
Poor girl! and is she drowned? —
Went down these depths? How dark they look, and cold!
She 's yonder! stop her! — Now! — there! — hold her!
hold!"

XL.

They gaze upon his ghastly face.
" What ails thee, Lee? and why that glare?"
" Look! ha! 't is gone, and not a trace!
No, no, she was not there! —
Who of you said ye heard her when she fell?
'T was strange! — I 'll not be fooled! — Will no one tell?"

XLI.

He paused. And soon the wildness passed.
Then came the tingling flush of shame.
Remorse and fear are gone as fast.
" The silly thing 's to blame
To quit us so. 'T is plain she loved us not;
Or she had stayed awhile, and shared my cot."

XLII.

And then the ribald laughed. The jest,
Though old and foul, loud laughter drew;
And fouler yet came from the rest
Of that infernal crew.
Note, Heaven, their blasphemy, their broken trust!
Lust panders murder; murder panders lust!

XLIII.

Now slowly up they bring the dead
From out the silent, dim-lit room.
No prayer at their quick burial said;
No friend to weep their doom.
The hungry waves have seized them one by one;
And, swallowing down their prey, go roaring on.

XLIV.

Cries Lee, " We must not be betrayed;
'T is but to add another corse!
Strange words, we 're told, an ass once brayed:
I 'll never trust a horse!
Out! throw him on the waves alive! — he 'll swim;
For once a horse shall ride; we all ride him."

XLV.

Such sound to mortal ear ne'er came
As rang far o'er the waters wide.
It shook with fear the stoutest frame:
The horse is on the tide!
As the waves leave, or lift him up, his cry
Comes lower now, and now is near and high.

XLVI.

And through the swift wave's yesty crown
His scared eyes shoot a fiendish light,
And fear seems wrath. He now sinks down,
Now heaves again to sight,
Then drifts away; and through the night they hear
Far off that dreadful cry. — But morn is near.

XLVII.

O, hadst thou known what deeds were done,
When thou wast shining far away,
Wouldst thou let fall, calm-coming sun,
Thy warm and silent ray?
The good are in their graves; thou canst not cheer
Their dark, cold mansions: Sin alone is here.

XLVIII.

"The deed's complete! The gold is ours!
There, wash away that bloody stain!
Pray, who 'd refuse what fortune showers?
Now, lads, we lot our gain!
Must fairly share, you know, what 's fairly got?
A truly good night's work! Who says 't was not?"

XLIX.

There 's song, and oath, and gaming deep,
Hot words, and laughter, mad carouse;
There 's naught of prayer, and little sleep;
The devil keeps the house!
" Lee cheats!" cried Jack. Lee struck him to the heart.
" That 's foul!" one muttered. — " Fool! you take your part! —

L.

" The fewer heirs, the richer, man!
Hold forth your palm, and keep your prate!
Our life, we read, is but a span.
What matters soon or late?"
And when on shore, and asked, Did many die?
" Near half my crew, poor lads!" he 'd say, and sigh.

LI.

Within the bay, one stormy night,
The isle-men saw boats make for shore,
With here and there a dancing light,
That flashed on man and oar.
When hailed, the rowing stopped, and all was dark.
" Ha! lantern-work! — We 'll home! They 're playing shark!"

LII.

Next day at noon, within the town,
All stare and wonder much to see
Matt and his men come strolling down;
Boys shouting, " Here comes Lee!"
" Thy ship, good Lee?" " Not many leagues from shore
Our ship by chance took fire." — They learned no more.

LIII.

He and his crew were flush of gold.
" You did not lose your cargo, then ? "
" Where all is fairly bought and sold,
Heaven prospers those true men.
Forsake your evil ways, as we forsook
Our ways of sin, and honest courses took !

LIV.

" Would see my log-book ? Fairly writ,
With pen of steel, and ink of blood !
How lightly doth the conscience sit !
Learn, truth 's the only good."
And thus, with flout, and cold and impious jeer,
He fled repentance, if he scaped not fear.

LV.

Remorse and fear he drowns in drink.
" Come, pass the bowl, my jolly crew !
It thicks the blood to mope and think.
Here 's merry days, though few ! "
And then he quaffs. — So riot reigns within ;
So brawl and laughter shake that house of sin.

LVI.

Matt lords it now throughout the isle ;
His hand falls heavier than before ;
All dread alike his frown or smile.
None come within his door,
Save those who dipped their hands in blood with him ;
Save those who laughed to see the white horse swim.

LVII.

"To night 's our anniversary;
And, mind me, lads, we have it kept
With royal state and special glee!
Better with those who slept
Their sleep that night would he be now, who slinks!
And health and wealth to him who bravely drinks!"

LVIII.

The words they speak, we may not speak;
The tales they tell, we may not tell.
Mere mortal man, forbear to seek
The secrets of that hell!
Their shouts grow loud: 'T is near mid-hour of night:
What means upon the waters that red light?

LIX.

Not bigger than a star it seems.
And now 't is like the bloody moon!
And now it shoots in hairy streams!
It moves! — 'T will reach us soon!
A ship! and all on fire! — hull, yard, and mast!
Her sails are sheets of flame! — she 's nearing fast!

LX.

And now she rides upright and still,
Shedding a wild and lurid light
Around the cove, on inland hill,
Waking the gloom of night.
All breathes of terrour! men, in dumb amaze,
Gaze on each other in the horrid blaze.

LXI.

It scares the sea-birds from their nests;
They dart and wheel with deafening screams;
Now dark, — and now their wings and breasts
Flash back disastrous gleams.
Fair Light, thy looks strange alteration wear; —
The world's great comforter, — why now its fear?

LXII.

And what comes up above the wave,
So ghastly white? A spectral head!
A horse's head! (May Heaven save
Those looking on the dead, —
The waking dead!) There, on the sea he stands, —
The Spectre-Horse! He moves! he gains the sands;

LXIII.

And on he speeds! His ghostly sides
Are streaming with a cold, blue light.
Heaven keep the wits of him who rides
The Spectre-Horse to-night!
His path is shining like a swift ship's wake;
Before Lee's door he gleams like day's gray break.

LXIV.

The revel now is high within;
It bursts upon the midnight air.
They little think, in mirth and din,
What spirit waits them there.
As if the sky became a voice, there spread
A sound to appall the living, stir the dead.

LXV.

The Spirit-Steed sent up the neigh ;
It seemed the living trump of hell,
Sounding to call the damned away,
To join the host that fell.
It rang along the vaulted sky : the shore
Jarred hard, as when the thronging surges roar.

LXVI.

It rang in ears that knew the sound ;
And hot, flushed cheeks are blanched with fear.
Ha ! why does Lee look wildly round ?
Thinks he the drowned horse near ?
He drops his cup, — his lips are stiff with fright.
Nay, sit thee down, — it is thy banquet night.

LXVII.

" I cannot sit ; — I needs must go :
The spell is on my spirit now.
I go to dread, — I go to woe ! "
O, who so weak as thou,
Strong man ! His hoofs upon the door-stone, see,
The Shadow stands ! His eyes are on thee, Lee !

LXVIII.

Thy hair pricks up ! — " O, I must bear
His damp, cold breath ! It chills my frame !
His eyes, — their near and dreadful glare
Speaks that I must not name ! "
Art mad to mount that Horse ! — " A power within,
I must obey, cries, ' Mount thee, man of sin ! ' "

LXIX.

He 's now upon the Spectre's back,
With rein of silk and curb of gold.
'T is fearful speed! — the rein is slack
Within his senseless hold;
Borne by an unseen power, right on he rides,
Yet touches not the Shadow-Beast he strides.

LXX.

He goes with speed; he goes with dread!
And now they 're on the hanging steep!
And, now, the living and the dead,
They 'll make the horrid leap!
The Horse stops short, — his feet are on the verge!
He stands, like marble, high above the surge.

LXXI.

And, nigh, the tall ship 's burning on,
With red, hot spars and crackling flame;
From hull to gallant, nothing 's gone; —
She burns, and yet 's the same!
Her hot, red flame is beating, all the night,
On man and Horse, in their cold, phosphor light.

LXXII.

Through that cold light the fearful man
Sits looking on the burning ship.
Wilt ever rail again, or ban?
How fast he moves the lip!
And yet he does not speak, or make a sound!
What see you, Lee? the bodies of the drowned?

LXXIII.

" I look, where mortal man may not, —
Down to the chambers of the deep.
I see the dead, long, long forgot;
I see them in their sleep.
A dreadful power is mine, which none can know,
Save he who leagues his soul with death and woe."

LXXIV.

Thou mild, sad mother, silent moon,
Thy last, low, melancholy ray
Shines towards him. Quit him not so soon!
Mother, in mercy, stay!
Despair and death are with him; and canst thou,
With that kind, earthward look, go leave him now?

LXXV.

O, thou wast born for worlds of love;
Making more lovely in thy shine
Whate'er thou look'st on: hosts above,
In that soft light of thine,
Burn softer; earth, in silvery veil, seems heaven.
Thou 'rt going down! — hast left him unforgiven!

LXXVI.

The far, low west is bright no more.
How still it is! No sound is heard
At sea, or all along the shore,
But cry of passing bird.
Thou living thing, — and dar'st thou come so near
These wild and ghastly shapes of death and fear?

LXXVII.

And long that thick, red light has shone
On stern, dark rocks, and deep, still bay,
On man and Horse that seem of stone,
So motionless are they.
But now its lurid fire less fiercely burns:
The night is going, — faint, gray dawn returns.

LXXVIII.

That Spectre-Steed now slowly pales
Now changes like the moonlit cloud;
That cold, thin light now slowly fails,
Which wrapt them like a shroud.
Both ship and Horse are fading into air.
Lost, mazed, alone, see, Lee is standing there!

LXXIX.

The morning air blows fresh on him;
The waves are dancing in his sight;
The sea-birds call, and wheel, and skim.
O blessed morning light!
He doth not hear their joyous call; he sees
No beauty in the wave, nor feels the breeze.

LXXX.

For he's accursed from all that's good;
He ne'er must know its healing power.
The sinner on his sin shall brood,
And wait, alone, his hour.
A stranger to earth's beauty, human love, —
No rest below for him, no hope above!

LXXXI.

The sun beats hot upon his head.
He stands beneath the broad, fierce blaze,
As stiff and cold as one that 's dead:
A troubled, dreamy maze
Of some unearthly horrour, all he knows, —
Of some wild horrour past, and coming woes.

LXXXII.

The gull has found her place on shore;
The sun gone down again to rest;
And all is still but ocean's roar:
There stands the man unblest.
But, see, he moves, — he turns, as asking where
His mates: — Why looks he with that piteous stare?

LXXXIII.

Go, get ye home, and end your mirth!
Go, call the revellers again!
They 're fled the isle; and o'er the earth
Are wanderers, like Cain.
As he his door-stone passed, the air blew chill.
The wine is on the board; Lee, take your fill!

LXXXIV.

" There 's none to meet me, none to cheer:
The seats are empty, — lights burnt out;
And I, alone, must sit me here:
Would I could hear their shout!"
He ne'er shall hear it more, — more taste his wine!
Silent he sits within the still moonshine.

LXXXV.

Day came again; and up he rose,
A weary man, from his lone board;
Nor merry feast, nor sweet repose,
Did that long night afford.
No shadowy-coming night, to bring him rest,—
No dawn, to chase the darkness of his breast!

LXXXVI.

He walks within the day's full glare,
A darkened man. Where'er he comes,
All shun him. Children peep and stare;
Then, frightened, seek their homes.
Through all the crowd a thrilling horrour ran.
They point and say,—"There goes the wicked man!"

LXXXVII.

He turns, and curses in his wrath
Both man and child; then hastes away
Shoreward, or takes some gloomy path;
But there he cannot stay:
Terrour and madness drive him back to men;
His hate of man to solitude again.

LXXXVIII.

Time passes on, and he grows bold;
His eye is fierce, his oaths are loud;
None dare from Lee the hand withhold;
He rules and scoffs the crowd.
But still at heart there lies a secret fear;
For now the year's dread round is drawing near.

LXXXIX.

He laughs, but he is sick at heart;
He swears, but he turns deadly pale;
His restless eye and sudden start, —
They tell the dreadful tale
That will be told: it needs no words from thee
Thou self-sold slave to fear and misery.

XC.

Bond-slave of sin! again the light!
"Ha! take me, take me from its blaze!"
Nay, thou must ride the Steed to-night!
But other weary days
And nights must shine and darken o'er thy head,
Ere thou shalt go with Him to meet the dead.

XCI.

Again the ship lights all the land;
Again Lee strides the Spectre-Beast;
Again upon the cliff they stand.
This once is he released! —
Gone ship and Horse; but Lee's last hope is o'er;
Nor laugh, nor scoff, nor rage, can help him more.

XCII.

His spirit heard that Spirit say,
"Listen! — I twice have come to thee.
Once more, — and then a dreadful way!
And thou must go with me!"
Ay, cling to earth as sailor to the rock!
Sea-swept, sucked down in the tremendous shock,

XCIII.

He goes! — So thou must loose thy hold,
And go with Death; nor breathe the balm
Of early air, nor light behold,
Nor sit thee in the calm
Of gentle thoughts, where good men wait their close.
In life, or death, where look'st thou for repose?

XCIV.

Who 's sitting on that long, black ledge,
Which makes so far out in the sea,
Feeling the kelp-weed on its edge?
Poor, idle Matthew Lee!
So weak and pale? A year and little more,
And bravely did he lord it round the shore.

XCV.

And on the shingle now he sits,
And rolls the pebbles 'neath his hands;
Now walks the beach; now stops by fits,
And scores the smooth, wet sands;
Then tries each cliff, and cove, and jut, that bounds
The isle; then home from many weary rounds.

XCVI.

They ask him why he wanders so,
From day to day, the uneven strand?
"I wish, I wish that I might go!
But I would go by land;
And there 's no way that I can find; I 've tried
All day and night!" — He seaward looked, and sighed.

XCVII.

It brought the tear to many an eye,
That, once, his eye had made to quail.
" Lee, go with us ; our sloop is nigh ;
Come ! help us hoist her sail."
He shook. — " You know the Spirit-Horse I ride !
He 'll let me on the sea with none beside ! "

XCVIII.

He views the ships that come and go,
Looking so like to living things.
O ! 't is a proud and gallant show
Of bright and broad-spread wings,
Making it light around them, as they keep
Their course right onward through the unsounded deep.

XCIX.

And where the far-off sand-bars lift
Their backs in long and narrow line,
The breakers shout, and leap, and shift,
And toss the sparkling brine
Into the air ; then rush to mimic strife :
Glad creatures of the sea, and full of life ! —

C.

But not to Lee. He sits alone ;
No fellowship nor joy for him ;
Borne down by woe, — but not a moan, —
Though tears will sometimes dim
That asking eye. O, how his worn thoughts crave —
Not joy again, but rest within the grave.

CI.

The rocks are dripping in the mist
That lies so heavy off the shore;
Scarce seen the running breakers; — list
Their dull and smothered roar!
Lee hearkens to their voice. — "I hear, I hear
You call. — Not yet! — I know my time is near!"

CII.

And now the mist seems taking shape,
Forming a dim gigantic ghost, —
Enormous thing! There 's no escape;
'T is close upon the coast.
Lee kneels, but cannot pray. — Why mock him so!
The ship has cleared the fog, Lee, see her go!

CIII.

A sweet, low voice, in starry nights,
Chants to his ear a plaining song;
Its tones come winding up the heights,
Telling of woe and wrong;
And he must listen till the stars grow dim,
The song that gentle voice doth sing to him.

CIV.

O, it is sad that aught so mild
Should bind the soul with bands of fear;
That strains to soothe a little child,
The man should dread to hear.
But sin hath broke the world's sweet peace, — unstrung
The harmonious chords to which the angels sung.

CV.

In thick, dark nights he 'd take his seat
High up the cliffs, and feel them shake,
As swung the sea with heavy beat
Below, — and hear it break
With savage roar, then pause and gather strength,
And, then, come tumbling in its swollen length.

CVI.

But he no more shall haunt the beach,
Nor sit upon the tall cliff's crown,
Nor go the round of all that reach,
Nor feebly sit him down,
Watching the swaying weeds : — another day,
And he 'll have gone far hence that dreadful way.

CVII.

To-night the charmed number 's told.
" Twice have I come for thee," It said.
" Once more, and none shall thee behold.
Come ! live one ! — to the dead ! " —
So hears his soul, and fears the gathering night ;
Yet sick and weary of the soft, calm light.

CVIII.

Again he sits in that still room ;
All day he leans at that still board ;
None to bring comfort to his gloom,
Or speak a friendly word.
Weakened with fear, lone, haunted by remorse,
Poor, shattered wretch, there waits he that pale Horse.

CIX.

Not long he waits. Where now are gone
Peak, citadel, and tower, that stood
Beautiful, while the west sun shone,
And bathed them in his flood
Of airy glory? — Sudden darkness fell;
And down they went, peak, tower, citadel.

CX.

The darkness, like a dome of stone,
Ceils up the heavens. 'T is hush as death,
All but the ocean's dull, low moan.
How hard he draws his breath!
He shudders as he feels the working Power.
Arouse thee, Lee! up! man thee for thine hour!

CXI.

'T is close at hand; for there, once more,
The burning ship. Wide sheets of flame
And shafted fire she showed before; —
Twice thus she hither came; —
But now she rolls a naked hulk, and throws
A wasting light; then settling, down she goes.

CXII.

And where she sank, up slowly came
The Spectre-Horse from out the sea.
And there he stands! His pale sides flame,
He 'll meet thee shortly, Lee.
He treads the waters as a solid floor;
He 's moving on. Lee waits him at the door.

CXIII.

They 're met. — " I know thou com'st for me,"
Lee's spirit to the Spectre said;
" I know that I must go with thee:
Take me not to the dead.
It was not I alone that did the deed!" —
Dreadful the eye of that still, Spectral Steed!

CXIV.

Lee cannot turn. There is a force
In that fixed eye, which holds him fast.
How still they stand, — the man and Horse!
" Thine hour is almost past."
" O, spare me," cries the wretch, " thou fearful One!"
" The time is come, — I must not go alone."

CXV.

" I 'm weak and faint. O, let me stay!"
" Nay, murderer, rest nor stay for thee!"
The Horse and man are on their way;
He bears him to the sea.
Hard breathes the Spectre through the silent night;
Fierce from his nostrils streams a deathly light.

CXVI.

He 's on the beach; but stops not there;
He 's on the sea, — that dreadful Horse!
Lee flings and writhes in wild despair.
In vain! The Spirit-Corse
Holds him by fearful spell; — he cannot leap:
Within that horrid light he rides the deep.

CXVII.

It lights the sea around their track, —
The curling comb, and steel-dark wave:
And there sits Lee the Spectre's back; —
Gone! gone! and none to save!
They 're seen no more; the night has shut them in.
May Heaven have pity on thee, man of sin!

CXVIII.

The earth has washed away its stain;
The sealed-up sky is breaking forth,
Mustering its glorious hosts again,
From the far south and north;
The climbing moon plays on the rippling sea.
— O, whither on its waters rideth Lee?

THE CHANGES OF HOME.

If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre.
BYRON.

For hours she sate; and evermore her eye
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick.
WORDSWORTH.

Pine not away for that which cannot be.
THE PINNER OF WAKEFIELD.

THE Vale was beautiful; and, when a child,
I felt its sunny peace come warm and mild
To my young heart. Within high hills it slept,
Which o'er its rest their silent watches kept,
And gave it kindly shelter, as it lay
Like a fair, happy infant in its play.
The dancing leaves, the grain that gently bent
In early light, as soft winds o'er it went;
The new-fledged, panting bird, in low, short flight,
That filled my little bosom with delight,
Yet mixed with fear, lest that some unseen harm
Should spoil its just-born joy, — all these a charm
Threw round my morn of being. Here I stood,
Where from its covert in the thick-boughed wood,

The slender rill leaped forth, with its small voice,
Into the light, as seeming to rejoice
That it was free; and then it coursed away,
With grass, and reeds, and pebbles holding play.

It seemed the Vale of Youth! — of youth untried,
Youth in the innocence and all the pride
Of its new life delighted; free from fears,
And griefs, and burdens, borne on coming years.

Such was the Vale. And then within it played
Edward, a child, and Jane, a little maid.
I see them now no more, where once they stood
Beside the brook, or 'neath the sloping wood.
The brook flows lonely on, o'er mimic mound
No longer made to leap with fairy bound.
Then, as they built the little dam and mill,
Their tongues went prattling with the prattling rill.
As if the babes and stream were playmates three,
With cheerful hearts, and singing merrily.
The tiny labour 's o'er; the song is done
The children sang; the rill sings on alone.

How like eternity doth nature seem
To life of man, — that short and fitful dream!
I look around me; nowhere can I trace
Lines of decay that mark our human race.
These are the murmuring waters, these the flowers
I mused o'er in my earlier, better hours.
Like sounds and scents of yesterday they come. —
Long years have past since this was last my home!

And I am weak, and toil-worn is my frame;
But all the Vale shuts in is still the same:
T is I alone am changed; they know me not:
I feel a stranger, or as one forgot.

The breeze that cooled my warm and youthful brow
Breathes the same freshness on its wrinkles now.
The leaves that flung around me sun and shade,
While gazing idly on them as they played,
Are holding yet their frolic in the air;
The motion, joy, and beauty still are there, —
But not for me! — I look upon the ground,
Myriads of happy faces throng me round,
Familiar to my eye; yet heart and mind
In vain would now the old communion find.
Ye were as living, conscious beings, then,
With whom I talked, — but I have talked with men!
With uncheered sorrow, with cold hearts have met;
Seen honest minds by hardened craft beset;
Seen hope cast down, turn deathly pale its glow;
Seen virtue rare, but more of virtue's show.

Yet there was one true heart: that heart was thine,
Fond Emmeline! and every beat was mine.
It stopt. — That stillness! — up it rose, and spread
Above me, awing, vast, strange, living, — dead!
No feeble grief that sobs itself to rest, —
Benumbing grief, and horrours filled my breast:
Dark death, and sorrow dark, and terrour blind, —
They made my soul to quail, they shook my mind, —
Wild rushings passed me as of driving wind,

The storm went o'er me. Once again I stand
Amid God's works, — his broad and lovely land.
It is not what it was, — no, not to me;
I cannot feel, though lovely all I see;
A void is in my soul; my heart is dry:
They touch me not, — these things of earth and sky.
E'en grief hath left me now; my nerves are steel;
Dim, pangless dreams my thoughts; — would I could feel!
O, look on me in kindness, sky and earth!
Companions were we almost from my birth.
Yet stir once more within me that pure love,
Which went with me by fountain, hill, and grove.
Delights I ask not of ye; let me weep
Over your beauties; let your spirit sweep
Across this dull, still desert of the mind;
O, let me with you one small comfort find!
The world, the world has stript me of my joy: —
Bless me once more; ye blest me when a boy.

Where are the human faces that I knew?
All changed; and even of the changed how few!
No tongue to give me welcome, bid me rest,
In sounds to stir the heart, like one new blest.

There stands my home, — no more my home; and they
Who loved me so, — they, too, have passed away.
The sun lies on the door-sill, where my book
I daily read, and fitted line and hook,
And shaped my bow; or dreamed myself a knight
By lady loved, by champion feared in fight.

— Gone 's thy fantastic dream ; thy lance is broke,
Thy helmet cleft! — No knight that struck the stroke.
'T was Time, who his strong hand upon thee laid,
Unhorsed thee, boy, and spoiled thee of thy maid.

Thus stood I yesterday ; and years far gone,
Present and coming years, to me were one ;
And long have been so ; for the musing see
Inward, and time they make eternity ;
Or put the present distant, till it blends
With sad, past thoughts, or bright ones that hope sends.

While dreaming so, I saw an aged man
Draw near. He bowed and spoke ; and I began, —

" Canst tell me, friend, I pray, whose home may be
The ancient house beneath that old, gray tree ? "

" They are a stranger race ; and since they came
We 've learned but little of them save the name.
The rumour ran they better days had known ;
And we, in pity, would have kindness shown, —
Kindness of fellowship ; not proffered aid,
To be with forced and humbling thanks repaid.
We saw they liked it not. A show of scorn
Was in their smile. O, they were higher born,
And sought out our retirement where to hide
Their fortune's fall."

" They should have hid their pride, —
Should have subdued it rather. 'T is a thorn
That frets the heart ; a chain it is that 's worn

On man's free motions, making him the slave
Of those he hates, because he dares not brave; —
The shrewd man's sober scorn, the idler's jeer;
Bound to the shame of which he lives in fear."

"Ay! on its neighbour, too, it shuts the door,
As that is shut. It was not so before;
For there, with wife and son, did Dalton dwell.
'T was cheerful welcome then and kind farewell;
Farewell so kind, so dwelling on the heart,
You wished to meet, were 't but again to part.
— The pair within the silent grave are laid."

"But he, their son? They had a son, you said?"

"A rich relation saw the boy had mind.
'Such minds a market in the world must find'; —
So said he. — 'And the boy must learning have;
For learning, power, and wealth, and honours gave.'
'Mind and a market! — Will he sell the child
As slaves are sold?' they ask. The uncle smiled.
'And does not Nathan teach to read and write,
To spell and cipher, — letters to indite?
What 's learning, then, that he must needs go seek
So far from home?' — 'They call it Latin, — Greek.'
Wisely all farther question they forbore;
And looked profound, though puzzled as before.

"The years passed on. Kind, frequent letters came,
Which showed the man and boy in heart the same;
By a hard world not hardened, nor yet vain
That much he knew, nor proud with all his gain.

" And he his own green Vale would see again,
And playmate boys, now turned to thoughtful men.
But ere the time, a fever, like a blast,
Swept through our homes ; and fearful, sudden, fast,
It struck down young and old : To see them fall,
But not the hand that smote them, shook us all.
It took the parents in their hopes and joy ;
They went, and never saw again their boy."

" But he ? "

" Within his grief there lived a power,
Withheld him, — that withholds him to this hour.
Though of his marriage first there went a tale,
Yet soon a mournful story reached the Vale.
A cloud shut out the light that brightly shone,
Set him in darkness, sorrowing and alone.
" Thy cheek is sudden pale ! thine eye is dim !
Thou art not well ! "

" Nay, on ! say what of him ? "

" No more is known. Time hath assuaging balm,
And time the tossing of the mind may calm.
But there 's a silent grief that finds no close,
Till death has laid us down to long repose.
That sleep may now be his ; or he may go
In search of rest, no rest on earth to know.
" But why so sad ? Why should a stranger grieve
When strangers mourn ? For all must mourn who live ! "

" Thou sayest true. But grief makes strangers kin.
'T is thine from crime and sorrow man to win,

To preach, woe came with sin; yet kindly given
To touch our hearts and lead us back to heaven: —
For such thy garb bespeaks thee; and though old,
Thine air, thy talk, seem slowly to unfold
One who within the Vale, in manhood's prime,
Lifted the lowly soul to thoughts sublime."

" And, stranger, who art thou, that in such tones
Greet'st me as one who old acquaintance owns?
Thy face is as a book I cannot read;
Nor does thy voice my spirit backward lead,
Stirring old thoughts."

" Nay, nay, thou look'st in vain!
For on my face the sea's and desert's stain;
And yet, both boy and man, I 'm in thy mind.
Canst nothing here of Harry Dalton find?"

He looked again. A gleam of joy arose,
An instant gleam, then sank in sad repose;
For lines he saw of trouble, more than age,
And words of grief thick written on the page.
Then laughing eyes and cheeks of youthful glow
Came to his mind, and grief that it was so
That joy and youth so soon away should go.

He gave his hand; but nothing either said,
And slowly turning, home in silence led.

Low were the words at our repast, and few;
Each felt the silence to the other due.

At length upon our thoughtful minds there stole
Converse that gently won the saddened soul.

Then toward the village we together walked,
And of old friends and places much we talked.
Who died, who left them, he went on to tell,
And who within their fathers' mansions dwell.

We reached a shop. No lettered sign displayed
The owner's name, or told the world his trade.
But on its door, cracked, rusty hinges swung;
And there a hook and well-worn horseshoe hung.
The trough was dry; the bellows gave no blast;
The hearth was cold; nor sparks flew red and fast;
Labour's strong arm had rested. Where was he,
Brawny and bare, who toiled, and sang so free?

But soon we came where sat an aged man.
His thin and snow-white hairs the breezes fan,
While he his long staff fingered, as he spoke
In sounds so low, they scarce the stillness broke.

"Good father!" said my guide. He raised his head,
As asking who had spoke; yet nothing said.
"The present is a dream to his worn brain;
And yet his mind will things long past retain."

My friend then questioned him of former days,
Mingling with what he asked some little praise.
His old eyes cleared; a smile around them played,
As on my friend his shaking hand he laid,

And spoke of early prowess. Friends he named;
And some he praised: they were but few he blamed.

"Dost thou remember Dalton?" asked my guide.

"Dalton? Full well! His little son beside,—
A waggish boy!—It will not from my thought,—
His curious look as I my iron wrought.
And, as the fiery mass took shape, his smile
Made me forget my labour for a while.
Before he left us, and when older grown,
He told of one who out from heaven was thrown,
Who forged huge bolts of thunder when he fell;
One-eyed his workmen, and his shop a hell;
So, called me Vulcan."

"Vulcan,—John,—art thou?
What! long-armed John, with moist and smutty brow?"

He gazed upon me, wondering and half lost;
Something it could not grasp his mind had crossed.
A moment's struggle in his face betrayed
The effort of the brain; and then he said,
Eager and quick,—"What! come!—Where, where 's
the boy?
And looks the same? 'T will give his parents joy!"
Then talked he to himself. His eyes grew dead;
He felt his hands; nor did he raise his head,
Or miss us as we left him, on our way
Along the street where the thick village lay.

To pass the doors where I had welcomed been,
And none but unknown voices hear within;

Strange, wondering faces at those windows see,
Once lightly tapped, and, then, a nod for me! —
To walk full cities and to feel alone,
From day to day to listen to the moan
Of mourning trees, — 't was sadder here unknown!

The village passed, we came where stood aloof
An aged cot with low and broken roof.
The sun upon its walls in quiet slept;
Close by the door the stream in silence crept;
No rustling birds were heard among the trees,
That high and silent stood, as slept the breeze.
The cot wide open; yet there came no sound
Of busy steps: — 't was all in stillness bound:
Solemn, yet lovely stillness, as a spell,
On this sweet rest and mellow sunshine fell.

And there, at the low door, so fixed is one,
As if for years she 'd borne with rain and sun,
All mindless of herself, and lost in thought
Which to her soul a far-off image brought.
About her shoulders hangs her long, white hair;
She clasps the post with fingers pale and spare,
And forward leans.

"What sees she in these hills?"

"'T is a vain fancy that her vision fills.
Or, rather, nothing sees she. Hope delayed,
Worn, feeble hope, which long her mind has swayed, —
Born and to die in grief, — the hope she knows;
A something gathered, 'mid her cherished woes,

From sad remembrances, from wishes vain, —
Dim fiction of the mind to ease its pain."

"Her name, I pray thee!"

"Dost thou wish to hear
Of two true lovers, Jane, and Edward Vere?"

"She, Jane? and look so old? — And can it be
That woe has done so well time's work with thee!"

"It struck her in her youth, as doth the blast
The opening flower! and then she withered fast."

"Her story let me hear."

"It soon is told;
Simple though sad; no mystery to unfold,
Save that one great, dread mystery, the mind,
Which thousands seek, but few, in part, can find.
We 'll rest us here, beneath the broad tree's shade;
The sun is hot upon the open glade."

"A little farther! Let us not obtrude
Upon her sorrows' sacred solitude."

"She marks us not: The curious passer-by,
Children who pause, and know not why they sigh,
Unheeded all by that fixed, gleamy eye.
But to her story. — She and that fair boy
Shared with each other childhood's griefs and joy.
Their studies one; and as they homeward went
With busy looks, on little schemes intent,

Their earnest, happy voices might be heard
Along the lane where sang the evening bird.
"Why should I speak of what you know so well?
What chanced when you had left us let me tell.

"Time changes innocence to virtues strong,
Or mars the man with passions foul and wrong;
To warm and new emotions time gives life,
Fluttering the heart in strange yet pleasing strife,
Filling the quickened mind with visions fair, —
Hues like bright clouds, that rest, like clouds, on air,
Deepening each feeling of the impassioned soul,
Round one loved object gathering then the whole.
So deepened, strengthened, formed, the love that grew
From childhood up, and bound in one the two.
So opened their fresh hearts, as to the sun
The young buds open: life was just begun.
For this it is to live, — the stir to feel
Of hopes, fears, wishes, sadness, joy, the zeal
That bands us one in life, death, woe, and weal.
And life it is, when a soft, inward sense
Pervades our being, when we draw from thence
Delights unutterable, thoughts that throw
Unearthly brightness round this world below;
Making each common day, each common thing,
Something peculiar to our spirit bring."

I saw in him a gentler sense, that played
'Mid saddened thoughts on this once young, fair maid,
As plays the little child, unconscious why
The rich, black pall, and that long, tremulous sigh.

"Thy talk of love," said I, "restores thy youth.
I know, decay nor age awaits on truth;
And he who keeps a simple heart and kind
May something there of early feelings find.
For in all innocent and tender hearts
A spirit dwells that cheerful thoughts imparts;
'Midst sorrows, sunny blessings it bestows
On those who think upon another's woes."

My friend went on.

"At length drew near the time
That he must travel to some distant clime
In search of gain. 'A few short hours of life,'
He fondly said, 'and thou wilt be my wife!
Then long, bright days, all bright, without a cloud!'—
They never came; and he is in his shroud.
She gazed up in his hopeful face, and tried
To share his hope; then hung on him and sighed.
Her cheek turned pale, and her dark eye grew dim;
And then through tears again she 'd look on him.
In his full, clear blue eye an answering tear
Spoke comfort; for it told that she was dear,
That love was strong as hope; that though it grew
'Mid thoughts less sad than hers, 't was no less true,
And that in his bold, free, and cheerful mind
Her timid love its home would always find.

"The last day came, — a long, sad, silent day
It shone on two sick hearts; he must away.
And then he felt how hard it is to go
From one so dear, and leave to lonely woe

A spirit yearning for its place of rest,
And kindly sympathies, — a lover's breast.

" And he is gone, gone o'er the dreadful wave.
' Spare him ye dark, wild waters! Heaven him save!'
So prayed she; and the earnest prayer was heard.
A year past by: he came before the third.

" Then from the sealed-up heart joy gushed once more,
For he had come, come from the stranger's shore,
To his own Vale, far through the ocean's roar.

" Ah! sweet it is to gaze upon the face
Long seen but by the mind, to fondly trace
Each look and smile again: 't is life renewed, —
How fresh! How dim was that by memory viewed!
And, O, how pines the soul! how doth it crave
Only a moment's look! 'T is in the grave,
That lovely face; no more to bless thine eyes.
Nay, wait, thou 'lt meet it soon in yonder skies.

" The throbbing pulse beats calm again; and they,
Too deeply happy to be loud or gay,
Through all their childhood's walks — the lane, the grove,
Along the silvery rill — would slowly move,
Mingling their hopes' bright lights with softening shades
That memory threw 'mong hill-tops, streams, and glades;
For love is meditative; close it clings,
And thoughtful, to earth's simple, silent things.

" And thus they wandered; nearer heart to heart:
For they had known how hard it is to part,
To live in love, yet no communion hold, –
Day following day, yet all we feel untold.

" And she would listening sit, and hear him speak
Of fierce and tawny Turk, and handsome Greek,
Of the young crescent moon on sullen brow, —
The Cross of Christ profaned and made to bow.
— And what! Shall He, who hung above our head
That gentle light, see that whereon He bled
Bend to the image of the thing He framed?
Throng to the Cross! Our Saviour's Cross is shamed!

" He spoke of men of far more distant climes,
Their idol worship stained with fearful crimes;
Of manners strange and dresses quaint would tell;
But most upon the sea he loved to dwell,
Its deep, mysterious voice, its maddened roar,
Its tall, strong waves, the white foam, and the shore,
The curse that on its gloomy spirit hung, —
'Thou ne'er shalt sleep!' through all its chambers rung;
Till closer to his side she 'd trembling draw,
As if some dim and fearful thing she saw; —
So would this awful mystery fold her round:
She quailed as though she heard the very sound.

" 'And must you on the heaving sea again, —
Mighty destroyer, deep, broad grave of men?'
'This once!' said he, 'no more!' She raised her eyes
To his: her voice upon her pale lip dies.
Her first-felt sorrow came upon her mind,
And back she shrunk, as shrinks he whom they bind

Once more upon the rack: — poor, weakened wretch!
Save him! O, not again its fiery stretch!

"Sharp our first pangs; but in the mind is life;
Our hearts beat strong, and fit us for the strife;
A joyous sense still breathes amid our grief,
As shoots, in drooping boughs, a tender leaf.
But when woe comes again, our spirits yield,
Our hearts turn faint, we cannot lift the shield;
There is no strength in all our bones; we fall,
And call for mercy, — trembling, prostrate, call.

"The sun was down, and softened was the glow
On cloud and hill, — but now a joyous show.
Quiet the air. Its light the young moon sent
On this sad pair as up the Vale they went.
O, gentle is thy silver ray, fair moon!
Meet guide art thou for those to part so soon;
There 's pity in thy look; and we below
Do love thee most, who feel the touch of woe.

"And up among the distant hills are they,
To meet the weekly coach upon its way.
They lingered till was heard a rumbling sound,
Which spread among the hills that lay around.
Soon rung the smart-cracked whip; and then the cheer,
And quick, sharp tramp told the strong steeds were near.
'T was one imploring look; and then she fell
Upon his neck; they uttered no farewell;
One short, convulsive clasp, one heart-sick groan;
No other look, — that one weak, bitter moan, —

And then her arms fell from him. All is o'er!
Poor woe-struck girl, she never clasped him more!

" The coach which bore him sank behind the hill.
The short, quick bustle passed, the earth is still;
The agony is over; a dull haze
Hangs round her mind, — upon the void her gaze.
A fearful calm is on that fair, sad brow!
O, who shall gently part its dark locks now,
Or press its saintly whiteness? — He is gone
Who, blessing, kissed thee; thou must go alone,
Alone must bear thy sorrows many an hour,
Widowed of all thy hopes, — thy grief thy dower!

" She sought amid her daily cares for ease,
To lose all sense of self, and others please.
The heart lay heavy. With her grief was fear.
She thought a gloomy something always near,
That o'er her like a mighty prophet stood,
Uttering her doom, — 'For thee no more of good!
Thy joys are withered round thee! Read the date
Of all thy hopes! Thou art set desolate!'

" A year went by. Another came and passed.
'This third,' her friends would say, 'must be the last';
Spake of his coming, then, and how he 'd look.
She turned more pale; her head she slowly shook,
And something muttered, as in talk with one
Whom no one saw; then said, — 'It must be done!'

" And when the tale was told, the ship had sailed,
That nothing more was known, that hope had failed;

It is fulfilled!' she said; 'Prophetic Power,
Thou told'st me true! 'T is come, — the fated hour!'

"Her look was now like cold and changeless stone.
She left her home, for she would be alone;
Wandered the fields all o'er; and up the hill,
Where last they parted, stood at morning still,
And far along that region gazed, as she
In the blue distance saw the moving sea;
And of the far-off mountain-mist would frame
Long spars, and sails, and speak the lost ship's name;
And watch with glee, to see how fast it neared;
Grow restless then, — 'It ne'er will come,' she feared.
"Soon rolls the mist away; and she is left,
Of sea, ship, lover, shaping hopes bereft.
Through glistening tears she 'd look, and see them go;
Then to the Vale, to dwell upon her woe,
And listen to the dark pine's murmuring,
Thinking the spirit of the sea did sing
Its sad, low song: for, 'Such,' would Edward say,
'Its mourning tones, where long sand-beaches lay.'

"But when through naked trees the strong wind went,
Roaring and fierce, and their tossed arms were rent, —
With sullen mutterings, then a moaning sigh, —
'Hear them!' she 'd shriek; 'the waves run mountain-
high! —
They 're mad! — They shake her in their wrath! —
she 's down! —
Went to the bottom, said they? — Did all drown?
He told me he would come, and I should be
His own, own wife! — There 's mercy in the sea?'

" The spring was come again. — There is a grief
Finds soothing in the bud, and bird, and leaf;
A grief there is of deeper, withering power,
That feels death lurking in the springing flower,
That stands beneath the sun, yet circled round
By a strange darkness, — stands amid the sound
Of happy things, and yet in silence bound;
Moves in a fearful void amid the throng,
And deems that happy nature does it wrong;
Thinks joy unkind; feels it must walk alone,
That not on earth is one to hear its moan,
Or bring assuaging sympathies, or bind
A broken heart, or cheer a desert mind.
— And thus she walks in silent loneliness;
Sounds come, and lovely sights around her press;
Yet all in vain! She something sees and hears,
But feels not, — dead to pangs, to joys, to fears;
Nor wishes aught. The mind, all waste and worn,
Lives but to faintly know itself forlorn;
Remembrance of past joys wellnigh forgot,
As if one changeless gloom had been her lot;
And, sure, had thought it strange that there should be
Blessings in store for one so poor as she.

" She wandered in this dull and fearful mood,
A shadow 'mid the shadows of the wood;
Would sit the livelong day and watch the stream,
And pore, when shed the moon its fainter beam,
In dreamy thought, upon its dreamy light. —
How few of grief have felt, can feel, the might!

" Season of thought! The leaves are dropping now,
Tawny or red, from off their parent bough;

Nor longer plays their glossy green in air,
Over thy slender form and long, dark hair.
Myriads of gay ones fluttered over thee; —
Thou now look'st up at that bare, silent tree.
Thou, too, art waste and silent: in thy spring
The cold winds came, and struck thee blossoming!
Nor sound, nor life, nor motion, in thy mind:
All lost to sense, what would thy spirit find?

"They led her home. She went; nor asked to stay.
The same to her the wood, the house, the way.
The talk goes on, the laugh, the daily tasks:
She stands unmoved; she nothing heeds nor asks.
Above the fire, sea-shells, from distant lands,
Once ranged by her, she feels with idle hands.
And what the soul's communion none could trace:
No gleamings of the past in that still face!

"They marked, when spring returned and warmer days,
She stood, as now, on yonder hill her gaze.
They thought not what it meant, nor cared to know
The glimmerings of a mind whose light was low.
They saw, as up the hill the hot steeds came,
A strange and sudden shuddering take her frame;
And then a childish laugh; and gleamed her eye.
The coach went down, — they heard a scarce breathed sigh.
A shade passed o'er her face, as quickly go
Shadows of sailing clouds on fields below;
Then all was clear and still; the unmeaning smile,
The senseless look returned, which fled awhile.

And thus her dreamy days, months, years are gone:
Not knowing why she looks, she yet looks on.
— We'll homeward now!"

Death is a mournful sight,
But what is death, to this dread, living blight!

Thou who didst form us with mysterious powers,
And give a conscious soul, and call it ours;
Thou who alone dost know the strife within
Wilt kindly judge, nor name each weakness sin.
Thou art not man, who only sees in part,
Yet deals unsparing with a brother's heart;
For Thou look'st in upon the struggling throng
That war, — the good with ill, — the weak with strong.
And those Thy hand hath wrought of finer frame,
When grief o'erthrows the mind, Thou wilt not blame;
But say, "It is enough!" — and pity show, —
"Thy pain shall turn to joy, thou child of woe!
Thy heart at rest, and dark mind cleared away,
Heaven's light shall dawn on thee, a calmer day."

The sun was nigh its set, as we once more,
With saddened spirits, reached the good man's door.
And there we rested, with a gorgeous sight
Above our heads, — the elm in golden light.
Thoughtful and silent for a while, he then
Talked of my coming: — "Thou wilt not again
From thine own Vale? And we will make thy home
Pleasant; and it shall glad thee to have come."
Then of my garden and my house he spoke,
And well-ranged orchard on the sunny slope;

And grew more bright and happy in his talk
Of social winter eve and summer walk.
And, while I listened, to my sadder soul
A sunnier, gentler sense in silence stole;
Nor had I heart to spoil the little plan
Which cheered the spirit of the kind old man.

At length I spake: —

"No! here I must not stay.
I'll rest to-night, — to-morrow go my way."

He did not urge me. — Looking in my face,
As he each feeling of the heart could trace,
He pressed my hand, and prayed I might be blessed,
Where'er I went, — that Heaven would give me rest.

The silent night has passed into the prime
Of day, — to thoughtful souls a solemn time.
For man has wakened from his nightly death
And shut-up sense, to morning's life and breath.
He sees go out in heaven the stars, that kept
Their glorious watch while he unconscious slept, —
Feels God was round him while he knew it not, —
Is awed, — then meets the world, and God 's forgot.
So may I not forget thee, holy Power!
Be ever to me as at this calm hour.

The tree-tops now are glittering in the sun:
Away! 'T is time my journey was begun!

Why should I stay, when all I loved are fled,
Strange to the living, knowing but the dead, —

A homeless wanderer through my early home, —
Gone childhood's joy, and not a joy to come!
To pass each cottage, and to have it tell,
Here did thy mother, here a playmate, dwell!
To think upon that lost one's girlish bloom,
And see that sickly smile, and mark her doom, —
It haunts me now, — her dim and wildered brain;
I would not look upon that eye again!

Let me go, rather, where I shall not find
Aught that my former self will bring to mind.
These old, familiar things, where'er I tread,
Are round me like the mansions of the dead.
No! wide and foreign lands shall be my range:
That suits the lonely soul, where all is strange.

Then, for the dashing sea, the broad, full sail!
And fare thee well, my own green, quiet Vale.

FACTITIOUS LIFE.

The world is too much with us; late or soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon.

WORDSWORTH.

But if his word once teach us, — shoot a ray
Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
Truths undiscerned but by that holy light, —
Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptized
In the pure fountain of eternal love,
Has eyes indeed.

COWPER.

The severe schooles shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a pourtract, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some more real substance in that invisible Fabrick.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

SCARCE two-score years are gone since life began,
Yet many changes have I seen in man.
But when I 'm seated in my easy chair,
(My "stede of bras,") and up through viewless air
Go flying on by generations back,
O, then, what changes pass I in my track!
"Cambuscan bold" might course o'er many a clime·
I in a moment compass earth and time,
Seeing what is and hath been; and I view
Much very old, that some think very new.

The grandam to the modern belle complains,
You 've stole my waist. May you endure its pains, —
Steel and the cord! — In his fine dandy son
The ghost of Squaretoes sees himself outdone.
" Pull off my boots," he cries, with crazy Lear;
And squaretoed boots and Squaretoes disappear. —
Fie, scant-robed ghost, to thus cut roundabout
That modest miss, and so play " Pedler Stout."
O, take no more than is thy own, — the train;
Shame to pure eyes! — the rest give back again.
If on such errands you come back to earth,
You 'll leave us all as naked as at birth.
Wife, virgin, mother, see them, there they walk!

Dress as they may, good Sir, you must not talk.
For learn, in times like these you 're not to say
What others do, though done in open day.
Our language, not our conduct, marks the mind.
Let that be pure, and this must be refined.
Ophelia's words would shock a modern belle.

Prince Hamlet, had Ophelia's robe that swell?
Did the wind sway it thus? the janty tread?
What said Laertes at his parting, maid?
" The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauties to " ——

O, stuff!
Have you no other subject for your song,
Than whether we go dressed too short or long?
If such the theme on which you mean to prose,
Excuse me, while you lecture, if I doze.

Nay, I am done! and rest on this as true;—
Though Fashion 's absolute, she 's fickle too.
E'en while I write, a transformation strange
Is going on, and shows that all is change.
And by the time these lines shall be in press,
They 'll need a learned note, in prose, on dress.

Not dress alone; opinions have their day;
That is deposed, and this awhile bears sway;
That mounts the throne in glistering robes once more;
They who adored, then scorned, again adore,
To scorn again: in one thing constant still,—
Themselves ne'er wrong, whoe'er the throne may fill.

Be it opinion, notion, fancy, whim,—
E'en what you will,—'t is all the same to him,
The grave philosopher; he wheels about
His system to the crowd; then wheels it out,
And shoves another in; as at a show
Trees, houses, castles, towns, move to and fro;—
Ransacks the lumber-room of ancient time,
The older, better, best in farthest clime;
For farthest off less likely to be known
The learned theft: the thing is all his own!
Old furniture, new varnished and new named,
Serves all his ends; the charlatan is famed.
O simple world, well gulled! he cries, with glee;
Blest "second-hand originality!"

From Asia, Africa, from Greece, behold
Rise from their antique tombs the sages old.
This modern son of light descries, with dread,
Their shadowy forms: They come, the mighty dead!

For pardon, wronged ones, at your feet I fall.
I own the theft; but strip me not of all!
Leave me my name, at least, if nothing more;
Save one from general scorn whom men adore.

The *name*, dishonored, keep, they with a frown
Reply; then turn, and to their graves go down.

Although upon the shore of time we stand,
And watch the ebb and flood along the strand;
Although what is has been, we yet may trace
A silent change upon the world's wide face.
'Mid renovated philosophic schemes,
And arts restored or lost, plans, fashions, dreams,
That, idly eddying, jostle side by side,
Down through them all there runs a steady tide
Of subtile alteration, scarce perceived;
As age, of hope and youthful warmth bereaved,
But faintly notes a change so soft and slow;
So gently dropped the leaves that lie below.
But bring the extremes together; let them greet, —
The elastic boy, and man on tottering feet.
We ask amazed, Can these indeed be one?
Yes, even so; we see what Time has done, —
That cunning craftsman, he that works alway,
Makes and unmakes, nor stops for night nor day,
(For they his bondmen are,) rules while he toils,
And laughs to think what purposes he foils
In vain, forecasting man; that, fool or knave,
(All but the truly wise) he holds a slave.

Thou universal Worker, thou hast wrought
Vast changes in the world of heart and thought.

Once flowed the stream of feeling, like a brook,
In natural windings; now we feel by book.
And once, as joy or sorrow moved the man,
He laughed or wept, unguided by a plan
Of outward port; for in his riper years
The *boy* still lived; and anger, love, and fears
Spoke out in action vehement: — 't was strength,
Strong heart, strong thought; thought, feeling, ran their length
In a wild grandeur, or they passive lay,
Like waters circled in a wooded bay,
That take from some slow cloud the quivering lights
Flung from its snowy rifts and glittering heights.

Yes, free and ever-varying played the heart;
Great Nature schooled it; life was not an art.
And as the bosom heaved, so wrought the mind;
The thought put forth in act; and unconfined,
The whole man *lived* his feelings. TIME shall say
If man 's the same in this our latter day.

The same! I scarcely know my work! For when
I take my rounds among the throngs of men,
E'en he who almost rivals me in years
Apes youth so well, his head of hair appears
So full and bright, I fain would hide my pate,
Rub out old scores, and start with fresher date.

The youth enacts the sage, contemns the dead,
Lauds his own times, and cries, Go up, bald head!
Misses and little masters read at school
Abridged accounts of governments and rule;

Word-wise, and knowing all things, nothing know; —
Would reap the harvest ere the ground they sow.
The world 's reversed; boy politicians spout;
And age courts youth, lest youth should turn him out.

The child is grown as cautious as threescore;
Admits, on proof, that two and two are four.
He to no aimless energies gives way;
No little fairy visions round him play;
He builds no towering castles in the sky,
Longing to climb, his bosom beating high;
Is told that fancy leads but to destroy;
You have five senses; follow them, my boy!
If feeling wakes, his parents' fears are such,
They cry, Don't, dearest, you will feel too much.

Does Time speak truth? I think so. Let us take
A single passion, for example's sake.

They talk of Love, or, rather, once they did,
When I was young: I 'm told 't is now forbid;
That love, with ghosts, is banished clean away,
And heads well crammed, the system of the day;
That should you beg a maid her ear incline
To your true love, she bids you love define;
Then talks of Dugald Stewart and of Brown,
And with philosophy quite puts you down;
On mood synthetical, analysis,
Descants awhile. — Most metaphysic Miss!
Who 'd win her must not like a lover look,
But grave philosopher, and woo by book.
Gaze on her face, and swear her eyes are stars;
She talks of Venus, Jupiter, and Mars.

Speak of the moon; its phases and eclipse
How caused, you hear from learned and ruby lips.
Vow you will pour your heart out like a flood;
She treats on venous and arterial blood;
Drives you half mad, then talks of *motive* nerve,
And nerves of *sense*, how they their purpose serve,
And how expression to the face impart,
How all-important to the painter's art,
Then wonders that our eyes had seen so well
Before we read about their nerves in Bell;
Thus, for love's mazes, leads you round about,
Through arts and sciences, an endless route.

O, no, it was not so when I was young;
No maiden answered love in such a tongue,
Or cared for planets in conjunction brought;
With her, 't was heart to heart, and thought to thought.
She tell what blood her veins and arteries fill!
Enough for her to feel its burning thrill.
She gaze upon the moon, as if she took
An observation! Love was in her look,
All gentle as the moon. Herself perplex
With light original, or light reflex!
Enough for her, "By thy pale beam," to say,
"Alone and pensive, I delight to stray;
And watch thy shadow trembling in the stream."
O maid, thrice lovelier than thy lovely dream!

And is the race extinct? Or where is hid
She, with the blushing cheek and downcast lid,
Tremblingly delicate, and like the deer,
Gracefully shy, and beautiful in fear?

Who wept with good La Roche, heard Harley tell
His secret love, then bid to life farewell? —
Dreamed of Venoni's cottage in the vale,
And of Sir Edward senseless, bleeding, pale?

Here guard thy heart; nor let the poison creep
Through the soul's languor, like delicious sleep.
Wake ere its rancour eats into the core:
His is not love; 't is appetite, — no more, —
A finer appetite, like love so dressed,
Thou 'dst be its victim, pitied and distressed;
Than smiles or innocence wouldst hold more dear
A wooing sadness, soft, repentant tear:
Tears, and dark falling locks, and snowy arm, —
In aught so beautiful can there be harm?

Ah! shun Sir Edward, maiden, for thy life;
Nor, once his mistress, think to be his wife;
Or, doomed for all thy days, if wife in name,
To live thy own, thy child's, thy husband's shame,
Be taunt's, suspicion's slave; nor dare to raise
Thine eye, though wronged, nor hope a husband's praise.
There 's reverence in true love; it dreads, abhors,
The tainted heart; it sues, protects, adores.
Then win thee reverence, if that thou wouldst win
True love: it holds no fellowship with sin.

Then why complain romantic love is dead,
If to uncertain paths it woo, and lead
The innocent, half doubting, yet half won,
Through softening twilight, mingled shade and sun,
While slowly steal the lights away, and creep
The shadows by, till on the fearful steep

She stands awhile at pause; then looks below;
Then leaps; — the closing waves above her flow,
And down she sinks for ever?
Very true.
But these the only dangers in your view? —
Or would you lay fair-flowering nature bare
Because, forsooth, you fear a canker there?
If love may lure romantic minds astray,
Will shrewder heads point out a surer way?

To live alone, cries one, how dull a life!
I think I 'll marry; and straight takes a wife.
Soon tired of home, and finding life still dull,
He joins his club, keeps horses and a trull;
Of jokes on loving husbands cracks a score,
And coarse as heartless, votes a wife a bore.
The widow-wife secures, her loss to mend,
A kinder *husband* in her husband's *friend;*
Or, unrestrained by love, yet held by vows,
Though scarce more fond, less faithless than her spouse.

One weds with age; and should she keep her truth,
As once she sighed for wealth, now sighs for youth;
Looks on its mantling cheek, and brown, crisp hair,
Then turns to age and wrinkles, in despair;
Her husband's harlot, feigns love's playful wiles,
So deals her bargained coaxings and her smiles,
The dotard dreams she loves; — thus acts her part,
And, robbed the joys of sin, still sins in heart.

But here a youthful pair. What think you now?
The friends agreed; say, shall they take the vow?

Connections quite respectable all round,
And ample property, and titles sound.

Most certainly an eligible match,
Estates so fit, like patch well set to patch.

'T is strange none thought of it before!

My friend,
How fit their minds? And do their feelings blend?

Why, as to these I have not yet inquired.
What more than I have said can be desired?
They 'll learn to like each other by and by.
'T is not my business into hearts to pry
After such whims. Besides, what them contents,
Contents me too. Come, let us sum their rents.
Houses in town, — say ten ——

Nay, join their hands.
Boggle at hearts! We ne'er should join their lands!
Though rough and sharp below, what then, forsooth?
Custom and art will make the surface smooth
To the world's eye, o'er this McAdam way
Of wedded life. We 'll have no more delay,
But join them straight. — The pair have made a trade, —
Contract in lands and stocks 'twixt man and maid!
Partners for life, club chances, — weal or woe!
Hang out the sign! There, read! — A. B. & Co.!

And do unsightly weeds choke up the gush
Of early hearts? Are all the feelings hush

And lifeless now, that would have sent their sound
In unison, where young hearts throb and bound?
Tear up the weeds and let the soul have play;
Open its sunless fountains to the day;
Let them flow freely out; they make thy wealth.
Bathe thy whole being in these streams of health,
And feel new vigour in thy frame! — A boy!
And weigh thy pelf with love! — against a joy
That lifts the mind and speaks it noble, gives
Beauty ethereal, in which it lives
A life celestial here, on earth, — e'en here!
What canst thou give for this, and call it dear?
O, it is past all count! Pray, throw thee by
Thy tables; trust the heart; the tables lie.
Let not thy fresh soul wither in its spring.
Water its tender shoots, and they shall bring
Shelter to age. Then sit and think how blest
Have been thy days, thank God, and take thy rest.
Sell not thy heart for gold, then, nor for lands;
'T is richer far than all Pactolus' sands;
And where on earth would run the stream to lave
The curse away, and thy starved soul to save?

But all are reasoners, — father, mother, child;
And every passion 's numbered, labelled, filed,
And taken down, discussed, and read upon.

We read, last night, Mamma, through chapter one,
And left the second in the midst. Shall we
Go through with that?
The second? Let me see! —
The second treats of Grief. — Read, child!

Fourth head,
Concerning grief, is sorrow for the dead.

Know, happiness is duty. Then, be wise;
You 're not to grieve though one you care for dies.
Have many friends, and then you 'll scarcely know
When one departs, and save a world of woe.
Nor do we now retire to mourn; we live
Only in taking pleasure, or to give.

Is sorrow sin, Mamma?
It is a waste.
Sin, child! How vulgar! Mind me; say, *bad taste.*

But what is pleasure? Men have said of old,
'T is found in neither luxury, nor gold,
Nor fashion, nor the throng; but only true
Where minds are calm, and friends are dear and few;
That life's swift whirl wears out our finer sense,
Sucks down the good, and gives out nothing thence
But a tossed wreck, which, once the comely frame
Of some true joy, saves nothing but the name,
And drifts, a shattered thing, upon the shore,
Where lie the unsightly wrecks of thousands more.

To flee from sorrow, and alone to keep
The eye on happiness, leaves nothing deep
E'en in our joys. To put aside in haste
The cup of grief, makes vapid to the taste
The cup of pleasure. Think not, then, to spare
Thyself all sorrow, yet in joy to share.

Take up thy many-stringed harp, and thrum
On that one chord, and with a single thumb.
Now thrill the fibres of thy soul? or flow
In sounds of varying measure, swift or slow,
The full rich harmonies? Nay, listen on!
Thy soul has myriad strings where this has one!
Wearied so soon? Then take it up and play
On all its strings, but let its notes be gay.
Wearied again? and glad to throw it by?

Yes, tired, in faith; I long to hear it sigh;
I 'm worn with very glee. O, let me give
One note to touch my heart, and feel it live!

And thus the soul is framed; that if, alone,
We loose one chord, the harp will fail its tone,
The mighty harmonies within, around,
Die all away, or send a jarring sound.

Give over, then, and wisely use thy skill
To tune each passion rightly, not to kill.
To joy thee in the living, mourn the dead;
And know thou hast a heart, as well as head,—
A heart that needs, at times, the softening powers
Of grief, romantic love, and lonely hours,
And meditative twilight, and the balm
Of falling dews, and evening stars, and calm.

For, ever in the world, there forms a crust
About thy soul, and all within 's adust.
With sense beclouded, and perverted taste,
You toil abroad, and leave the heart a waste;

Dead while alive, and listless in the stir,
See all awry, deem manner character;
Not sentient of the right, nor loathing wrong,
You smile, and that call rude, which God calls strong;
No honest indignation in your breast,
Nor ardent love, but all things well expressed;
Your manner, like your dress, a thing put on:
The seen, not that beneath, your care alone.

The dress has made the form by nature given
Unlike aught ever seen in earth or heaven.
Where, girl, thy flowing motion, easy sweep,
Like waves that swing, nor break the glassy deep? —
All hard, and angular, and cased in steel!
And is it human? Can it breathe and feel?
The bosom beautiful of mould, — alas!
Where, now, thy pillow, youth? (but let it pass,)
And shapes in freedom lovely? I will bear
Distorted forms, leave minds but free and fair.
All, all alike conventional; the mind
Is tortured like the body, cramped, confined;
A thing made up by rules of art, for life;
Most perfect when with nature most at strife;
Till the strife ceases, and the thing of art,
Forgetting nature, no more plays a part;
Sees truth in the factitious; — pleasure's slave, —
Its drudge, not lord; in trifles only grave.

And with the high brought low, the little raised,
Nature forgotten, the factitious praised,
The world a gaud, life's stream a shallow brawl,
What, worldling, holds up virtue from a fall?

Virtue? Nay, mock it not. There sits its Form:
Thy hand upon its heart! Does 't beat? Is 't warm?

No pulse! and cold as death!

Then paint its face,
And dress it up, and give the thing a grace,
For sake of decency. Why, just look there!
How like it is! And what a modish air!
How very proper! Sure, it can't but pass,
And serve in time to come for fashion's glass.

With etiquette for virtue, heart subdued,
The right betraying, lest you should be rude,
Excusing wrong, lest you be thought precise,
In morals easy, and in manners nice;
To keep in with the world your only end,
And with the world to censure or defend,
To bend to it each passion, thought, desire,
With it genteelly cold, or all on fire,
What have you left to call your own, I pray?
You ask, What says the world? and that obey;
Where singularity alone is sin,
Live uncondemned, and prostrate all within.
You educate the manners, not the heart;
And morals make good-breeding and an art.
Though coarse within, yet polished high without,
And held by all respectable, no doubt,
You think, concealed beneath these flimsy lies,
To keep through life the set proprieties.

Ah, fool, let but a passion rise in war,
Your mighty doors of Gaza, posts and bar,

'T will wrench away. The Dalilah of old —
Your harlot virtue — thought with withes to hold
Her strong one captive; the Philistines came;
He snapped the bands as tow, and freed his frame,
And forth he walked. And think you, then, to bind
With cords like these the Samsons of the mind,
When tempters from abroad beset them? Nay!
They 'll out, and tread like common dust your sway.

You strive in vain against the eternal plan.
Set free the sympathies, and be a man;
And let the tear bedew thine honest eye,
When good ones suffer, and when loved ones die;
Deem not thy fellow as a creature made
To serve thy turn in pleasure or in trade,
And then thrown by. It breaks thy moral power
To wrap the eternal up in one short hour,
And ask what best will serve to help you on,
Or furnish comforts till your life is done.

And is it wise or safe to set at naught
The finer feelings in our nature wrought,
That throw a lovelier hue on innocence,
And give to things of earth a life intense,
Drawing a charmed circle round our home,
That nothing gross or sensual there may come?
Yet, what makes virtue beauty you would bend
To worldly purposes, — a prudent end!

From virtue take this beautiful regard,
And leave her homely prudence, duty hard;
Let passions unrefined, fed appetites,
Awake, and call aloud for gross delights;

Think you the paltry barriers you have built
Will stand the tug, and keep out shame and guilt?

Then leave your cold forecastings, sharp, close strife
For vantage; quit the whirl you call your life,
And see how God has wrought. This earth was made
For use of man, its lord, you hear it said.
Yes, it is full of uses; you may see
How plainly made for use is yonder tree,
To bear thee o'er the seas, or house thee dry,
When rains beat hard, and winds are bleak and high.

No, naught of this! But leaves, like fluttering wings,
Flash light; the gentle wind among them sings,
Then stops, and they too stop; and then the strain
Begins anew; and then they dance again.
I see the tinted trunk of brown and gray,
And rich, warm fungus, brighter for decay,
Whence rays of light, as from a fountain, flow;
I hear the mother robin talking low
In notes affectionate; the wide-mouthed brood
Chattering and eager for their far-sought food.
The air is spread with beauty; and the sky
Is musical with sounds that rise, and die
Till scarce the ear can catch them; then they swell;
Then send from far a low, sweet, sad farewell.
My mind is filled with beauty, and my heart —
With joy? Not joy, — with what I would not part
It is not sorrow, yet almost subdues
My soul to tears; it saddens while it woos.
My spirit breathes of love; I could not hate.
O, I could match me with the lowliest state

And be content, so I might ever know
This — what? I cannot tell, — not joy or woe!

Come, look upon this stream. Now stoop and sip
And let it gurgle round your parching lip.
It runs to slake the thirst of man and beast;
The simple beverage to great nature's feast.

My thirst is quenched; but still my spirit drinks,
And my heart lingers, and my mind, — it thinks
Thoughts peaceful, thoughts upon the flow of time,
And tells the minutes by this slender chime,
Music with which the waters gladly pay
Blossoms and shrubs that make their surface gay.

Thou little rill, why wilt thou run so fast
To mingle with rough ocean and his blast?
Thou thoughtless innocent, a world of strife
Is there! Then stay; nor quit thy peaceful life,
And all thy shining pebbles, and the song
Thou sing'st throughout the day, and all night long
Up to the sun, the stars, the moon when she
Kisses thy face, half sadness and half glee.
Thus pity fills my heart, and thus I dream,
When standing caring for the unconscious stream.

Now stretch your eye off shore, o'er waters mad
To cleanse the air and bear the world's great trade,
To rise, and wet the mountains near the sun,
Then back into themselves in rivers run,
Fulfilling mighty uses far and wide,
Through earth, in air, or here, as ocean-tide.

Ho! how the giant heaves himself, and strains
And flings to break his strong and viewless chains;
Foams in his wrath; and at his prison doors,
Hark! hear him! how he beats and tugs and roars,
As if he would break forth again, and sweep
Each living thing within his lowest deep!

Type of the Infinite! I look away
Over thy billows, and I cannot stay
My thought upon a resting-place, or make
A shore beyond my vision, where they break;
But on my spirit stretches, till 't is pain
To think; then rests, and then puts forth again.
Thou hold'st me by a spell; and on thy beach
I feel all soul; and thoughts unmeasured reach
Far back beyond all date. And, O, how old
Thou art to me! For countless years thou 'st rolled.
Before an ear could hear thee, thou didst mourn,
Prophet of sorrows, o'er a race unborn,
Waiting, thou mighty minister of death,
Lonely thy work, ere man had drawn his breath.
At last thou didst it well! The dread command
Came, and thou swept'st to death the breathing land;
And then once more unto the silent heaven
Thy lone and melancholy voice was given.

And though the land is thronged again, O Sea!
Strange sadness touches all that goes with thee.
The small bird's plaining note, the wild, sharp call,
Share thine own spirit: it is sadness all!
How dark and stern upon thy waves looks down
Yonder tall Cliff! — he with the iron crown.

And see! those sable Pines along the steep
Are come to join thy requiem, gloomy Deep!
Like stolèd monks they stand and chant the dirge
Over the dead, with thy low-beating surge.

These are earth's uses. God has framed the whole,
Not mainly for the body, but the soul,
That it might dawn on beauty, and might grow
Noble in thought from nature's noble show,
Might gather from the flowers an humble mind,
And on earth's ever-varying surface find
Something to win to kind and freshening change,
And give the powers a wide and healthful range;
To furnish man sweet company where'er
He travels on, — a something to call dear,
And more his own, because it makes a part
With that fair world that dwells within the heart.

Earth yields to healthful labour meat and drink,
That man may live, — for what? To feel and think;
And not to eat and drink, and, like the beast,
Sleep, and then wake and get him to his feast.
Over these grosser uses nature throws
Beauties so delicate, the man foregoes
Awhile his low intents; to soft delights
Yields up himself, and, lost in sounds and sights,
Forgets that earth was made for aught beside
His doting; and he woos it as his bride.
Beautiful bride! thou chaste one, innocent!
To win and make man like thee, thou wast lent.
Call with thy many pleasant voices, then;
The wanderer will turn to thee again.

Yes, now he turns! And see! the breaking day!
And through its dawn, the wanderer on his way!

Thou who art Life and Light, I see Thee spread
Thy glories through these regions of the dead;
I hear Thee call the sleeper: — Up! behold
The earth unveiled to thee, the heavens unrolled!
On thy transformed soul celestial light
Bursts; and the earth, transfigured, on thy sight
Breaks, a new sphere! Ay, stand in glad amaze,
While all its figures, opening on thy gaze,
Unfold new meanings. Thou shalt understand
Its mystic hierograph, thy God's own hand.

Yes! man shall read aright when he shall part
With human schemes, and in the new-born heart
Feel coursing new-born life; when from above
Shall flow, throughout his soul, joy, light, and love;
And he shall follow up these streams, and find
The One the source of nature, grace, and mind.
There, he in God and God in him, his soul
Shall look abroad and feel the world a whole;
"From nature up to nature's God," no more
Grope out his way through parts, nor place before
The Former the thing formed: Man yet shall learn
The outward by the inward to discern, —
The inward by the Spirit.

Here begin
Thy search, Philosopher, and thou shalt win
Thy way deep down into the soul. The light
Shed in by God shall open to thy sight

Vast powers of being; regions long untrod
Shall stretch before thee filled with life and God;
And faculties come forth, and put to shame
Thy vain and curious reasonings. Whence they came
Thou shalt not ask; for they shall breathe an air
From upper worlds around, that shall declare
Them sons of God, immortal ones; and thou,
Self-awed, in their mysterious presence bow;
And while thou listenest, with thy inward ear
The ocean of eternity shalt hear
Along its coming waves; and thou shalt see
Its spiritual waters, as they roll through thee;
Nor toil in hard abstractions of the brain,
Some guess of immortality to gain;
For far-sought truths within thy soul shall rise,
Informing visions to thine inward eyes.

Believe thyself immortal? Thou wilt know,
Wilt *feel* thyself immortal, when shall flow
Life from the Eternal, and shall end the strife
To part philosophy and heavenly life.
The soul to its prime union then restored,
The reason humbled and its God adored,
Inward beholdings, powers intuitive,
Shall wake that soul, and thought in feeling live,
And truth and love be one, and truth and love,
Felt like its life-blood, through the soul shall move.

But as the abstract takes visual form, and thought
Becomes an inward sense; so man is brought
In outward forms material to own
A character with mind in unison,

A spirit that with his may kindly blend,
And sprung with him from One, in One to end.
Set in his true relation, he shall see
Self and surrounding things from Deity
Proceeding and supplied; that earth but shows
What, ere in outward forms they first arose,
Lived spiritual, fair forms in God's own mind,
And now revealed to him, no longer blind,
Open relations to the world within,
And feeling, truth, and life in man begin.
In sympathy with God, his sympathies
Spread through the earth and run into the skies.
Full, yet receiving; giving out, yet full;
Thoughtful in action; quiet, yet not dull,
He stands 'tween God and earth: A genial light
Dawns in his soul; and while he casts his sight
Abroad, behold the sun! As on its track
It mounts high up the heavens, its fires give back
Only the effluence of that inward fire,
The reflex of the soul, and God its sire.
Where'er the soul looks forth, 't is to behold
Itself in secondary forms unfold.
Mysterious Archetype! see, wide unfurled
Before thine eye, thy own, thy inner world!

Now all is thine; nor need'st thou longer fear
To take thy share in all. The far, the near
To thee, are God's, — so, thine; and all things live
To higher ends than earth; and thou dost give
That life which God gives thee; and to impart
Is to receive; and o'er thy new-born heart
The earth and heavens pour out a living flood;
And thou, as God at first, seest all is good.

Now, Love his life, and Truth his light, alone,
His spirit even, head and heart at one,
A rule within that will no more deceive,
Man sees to love, and loves but to believe;
With mind well balanced, sees and loathes deceit,
And, loving truth, detects its counterfeit;
With all-pervading truth his only guide,
Hath naught that he would feign, and naught to hide; —
No selfish passion, and his vision just,
And claiming trust himself, he dares to trust;
And kind as trustful, ne'er to merit blind,
But liking widely, never fails to find,
Through all their varied forms, the good and true;
Nor seeks a substitute for narrowed view
In fond excess; nor meanly learns to rate
His love of some, as he may others hate;
Feeds not that love with venom; nor would raise
On one man's ruin piles to others' praise; —
Through nature, through the works of art, he feels
'T is ever changing beauty finely steals,
Which, varying, still is one; and thus he draws
From one, delight in all, through genial laws;
Feels that in love's expanse love's safety lies,
Nor what God proffers to himself denies;
That every attribute, when duly used,
Is wisdom, not our being's gifts refused,
And losing self in others, nobler end
Than self denied; to let our being blend
With general being, wakes intenser life;
And others' good our aim, ends inward strife;
That truth binds all things by a common tie;
And Love is universal harmony;

And man, to Truth and Love once more restored,
Shall hold with God and nature sweet accord.

O World, that thou wert wise! Hast thou not toiled
For seeming good enough? — enough been foiled?
How long must speak the void and aching heart?
I 'm weary of my task, this player's part —
Of smiles I cannot feel, feigned courtesy,
With feigning paid again, — my life a lie, —
I 've chased the false so long! and yet I know
The false hath naught for me but secret woe;
Yet knowing, still pursue with blinded haste,
Through systems, morals, fashions, manners, taste;
I ,ve bartered love for wealth, distinction sought,
And vain and loveless cares and envy bought;
Have climbed ambition's heights to feel alone,
Looked down, and seen how poor a world is won;
Have lost the simple way of right, and tried
Expedients curious, then for truth have sighed;
And, weak from energies on nothings spent,
Have sought, and then put by, what nature lent
For kind repair, — e'en like a pettish child, —
Sick of pretence, yet willingly beguiled.
Simplicity, and all the fair array
Of outward forms, that, varying, still obey
One law of truth, seemed tamely effortless;
I 've craved conceit, sharp contrast, and excess;
Have cast my noble nature down, and all
The outward world has felt and shared the fall.
Still dimly conscious of my low estate,
Conscious how soon the world and senses sate,
Groveller on earth, yet wanting will to rise,
Tired of the world, unfitted for the skies,

As to the abject, helpless slave, to me
Would come, with dire import, the word, Be free!
Poor, self-willed slave, a bondage hard is thine!
A bondage none can break but Power divine.

Spirit of Love, thou Power Divine, come down;
And where thou walk'dst a sufferer, wear thy crown;
Bid the vexed sea be still, the tumult cease;
Prophet, fulfil thy word, — reign Prince of Peace!
O, give that peace the world knows not, and throw,
Light of the world! thy light on all below;
Shine through the wildered mind, that man may see,
Himself and earth restored, God, all, in Thee!

THOUGHTS ON THE SOUL.

And when thou think'st of her eternity,
Think not that death against her nature is;
Think it her birth.

DAVIES.

But it exceeds man's thoughts to think how high
God hath raised man.

IBID.

IT is the Soul's prerogative, its fate,
To shape the outward to its own estate.
If right itself, then all around is well;
If wrong, it makes of all without a hell.
So multiplies the Soul its joy or pain,
Gives out itself, itself takes back again.
Transformed by thee, the world hath but one face.
Look there, my Soul, and thine own features trace!
And all through time, and down eternity,
Where'er thou goest, that face shall turn on thee.

WE look upon the outward state, and then
Say who is happiest, saddest who, of men;
We look upon the face, and think to know
The measure of the bosom's joy or woe.

A healthy man is that, and full his hoard,
His farm well stocked, and well supplied his board,
His helpmate comely, and a thrifty dame
Of cheerful temper, morn, noon, eve, the same.
How pale looks yonder man! his wife a scold,
His children sickly, starved with want and cold.
And there goes one, a freeman all his life,
Who ne'er had plagues of home, or child, or wife.
Another lives in that large, silent hall,
Bereft of friends, of wife, and child, and all.

Now, of the four, who 's happiest, saddest? Say!
I thought thou knewest. Well, then, why delay?
O, Hamlet-like, thou wouldst peruse the face.
And canst thou now the bosom's secrets trace?
The face is called the index of the mind;
Yet dost not read it, wise one? Art thou blind?
It is the Soul made visible. Behold
The shapes it takes. Speak! What may his unfold?

Why, joy, be sure; you saw how sweet it smiled.

Thou read a face! Go, read thy horn-book, child!

By summing that man's cattle by the head,
His friends alive, or wife and children dead,
Dost think to learn his spirit's breadth and length?
To find his joys' and sorrows' depth and strength?
Come! of these joys and sufferings make thy cast.
Now tell me, pray, how foot they up at last?
Of outward things thou canst not find the amount;
Think'st thou the Soul's emotions, then, to count?

To range upon the face the thoughts that fly
Swifter than light? — That rainbow, in the sky,
Severs each hue; but what prismatic glass
Hast thou to mark the feelings as they pass?
Or what wherewith to sound or tell the flow
Of that man's deep, and dark, and silent woe?
To name their kind, or reckon their degree,
When joys play through him like a sparkling sea?

Ocean and land, the living clouds that run
Above or stand before the setting sun,
Taking and giving glory in his light,
Live but in change too subtile for thy sight.
The lot of man, — see that more varied still
By ceaseless acts of sense, and mind, and will.
Yet couldst thou count up all material things,
All outward difference each condition brings,
Then wouldst thou say, perhaps, Lo, here the whole!
The whole? One thing thou hast forgot, — the Soul!

Life in itself, it life to all things gives;
For whatsoe'er it looks on, that thing lives, —
Becomes an acting being, ill or good,
And, grateful to its giver, tenders food
For the Soul's health; or, suffering change unblest,
Pours poison down to rankle in the breast:
As acts the man, e'en so it plays its part,
And answers, thought to thought, and heart to heart.

Yes, man reduplicates himself. You see
In yonder lake reflected rock and tree.
Each leaf at rest, or quivering in the air,
Now rests, now stirs as if a breeze were there

Sweeping the crystal depths. How perfect all!
And see those slender top-boughs rise and fall,
The double strips of silvery sand unite
Above, below, each grain distinct and bright.
Yon bird, that seeks her food upon that bough,
Pecks not alone; for look! the bird below
Is busy after food, and happy, too.
They 're gone! Both pleased away together flew.

Behold we thus sent up, rock, sand, and wood,
Life, joy, and motion from the sleepy flood?
The world, O man, is like that flood to thee:
Turn where thou wilt, thyself in all things see
Reflected back. As drives the blinding sand
Round Egypt's piles, where'er thou tak'st thy stand,
If that thy heart be barren, there will sweep
The drifting waste, like waves along the deep,
Fill up the vale, and choke the laughing streams
That ran through grass and brake, with dancing beams,
Sear the fresh woods, and from thy heavy eye
Veil the wide-shifting glories of the sky.

The rill is tuneless to his ear who feels
No harmony within; the south wind steals
As silent as unseen among the leaves:
Who has no inward beauty, none perceives,
Though all around is beautiful. Nay, more, —
In nature's calmest hour he hears the roar
Of winds and flinging waves; puts out the light,
When high and angry passions meet in fight;
And, his own spirit into tumult hurled,
He makes a turmoil of a quiet world;

And fiends of his own bosom people air
With kindred fiends, that hunt him to despair.
Hates he his fellow? Self he makes the rate
Of fellow-man, and cries, 'T is hate for hate.

Soul! fearful is thy power, which thus transforms
All things into thy likeness; heaves in storms
The strong, proud sea, or lays it down to rest,
Like the hushed infant on its mother's breast; —
Which gives each outward circumstance its hue,
And shapes the acts and thoughts of men anew,
Till they, in turn, or love or hate impart,
As love or hate holds rule within the heart.

Then dread thy very power; for works it wrong,
It gives to all without a power as strong
As is its own, — a power it can't recall:
Such as thy strength, e'en so will be thy thrall.
The fiercer are thy struggles, wrath, and throes,
Thou slave of sin, the mystic chain so grows
Closer and heavier on thee. Thus, thy strength
Makes thee the weaker, verier slave, at length,
Working, at thy own forge, the chain to bind,
And wear, and fret thy restless, fevered mind.

Be warned! Thou canst not break nor scape the power
In kindness given in thy first breathing hour.
Thou canst not slay its life: It must create;
And good or ill, there ne'er will come a date
To its tremendous energies: — The trust,
Thus given, guard, and to thyself be just.

Nor dream with life to shuffle off the coil;
It takes fresh life, starts fresh for further toil,
And on it goes, for ever, ever, on,
Changing, all down its course, each thing to one
With its immortal nature: All must be,
Like thy dread self, one dread eternity.

Blinded by passion, man gives up his breath,
Uncalled by God. We look, and name it Death.
Mad wretch! the soul hath no last sleep; the strife
To end itself but wakes intenser life
In the self-torturing spirit. Fool, give o'er!
Hast thou once been, yet think'st to be no more?
What! life destroy itself? O, idlest dream
Shaped in that emptiest thing, a doubter's scheme!
Think'st in a Universal Soul will merge
Thy soul, as rain-drops mingle with the surge?
Or, scarce less skeptic, sin will have an end,
And thy purged spirit with the holy blend
In joys as holy? Why a sinner now?
As falls the tree, so lies it. So shalt thou.
God's Book, rash doubter, holds the plain record;
Dar'st talk of hopes and doubts against that Word?
Or palter with it in a quibbling sense?
That Book shall judge thee when thou passest hence.
Then, — with thy spirit from the body freed, —
Then shalt thou know, see, feel, what 's life indeed!

Bursting to life, thy dominant desire
Shall upward flame, like a fierce forest fire;
Then like a sea of fire heave, roar, and dash, —
Roll up its lowest depths in waves, and flash

A wild disaster round, like its own woe;
Each wave cry, " Woe for ever!" in its flow,
And then pass on;—from far adown its path
Send back commingling sounds of woe and wrath:
The indomitable Will shall know no sway:
God calls;—Man, hear Him; quit that fearful way!

Come, listen to His voice who died to save
Lost man, and raise him from his moral grave;
From darkness showed a path of light to heaven;
Cried, Rise and walk; thy sins are all forgiven.

Blest are the pure in heart. Wouldst thou be blest?
He 'll cleanse thy spotted soul. Wouldst thou find rest?
Around thy toils and cares He 'll breathe a calm,
And to thy wounded spirit lay a balm;
From fear draw love; and teach thee where to seek
Lost strength and grandeur,—with the bowed and meek.

Come lowly; He will help thee. Lay aside
That subtle, first of evils,—human pride.
Know God, and, so, thyself; and be afraid
To call aught poor or low that He has made.
Fear naught but sin; love all but sin; and learn
In all beside 't is wisdom to discern
His forming, his creating power, and bind
Earth, self, and brother to the Eternal Mind.

Linked with the Immortal, immortality
Begins e'en here. For what is time to thee,
To whose cleared sight the night is turned to day,
And that but changing life, miscalled decay?

Is it not glorious, then, from thy own heart
To pour a stream of life? to make a part
With thy eternal spirit things that rot, —
That, looked on for a moment, are forgot,
But to thy opening vision pass to take
New forms of life, and in new beauties wake?

To thee the falling leaf but fades to bear
Its hues and odours to a fresher air;
Some passing sound floats by to yonder sphere,
That softly answers to thy listening ear.
In one eternal round they go and come;
And where they travel, there hast thou a home
For thy far-reaching thoughts. — O Power Divine!
Has this poor worm a spirit so like thine?
Unwrap its folds, and clear its wings to go!
Would I could quit earth, sin, and care, and woe!
Nay, rather let me use the world aright:
Thus make me ready for my upward flight.

Come, Brother, turn with me from pining thought,
And all the inward ills that sin has wrought;
Come, send abroad a love for all who live,
And feel the deep content in turn they give.
Kind wishes and good deeds, — they make not poor;
They 'll home again, full laden, to thy door.
The streams of love flow back where they begin;
For springs of outward joys lie deep within.

E'en let them flow, and make the places glad
Where dwell thy fellow-men. Shouldst thou be sad,
And earth seem bare, and hours, once happy, press
Upon thy thoughts, and make thy loneliness

More lonely for the past, thou then shalt hear
The music of those waters running near;
And thy faint spirit drink the cooling stream,
And thine eye gladden with the playing beam,
That now upon the water dances, now,
Leaps up and dances in the hanging bough.

Is it not lovely? Tell me, where doth dwell
The power that wrought so beautiful a spell?
In thy own bosom, Brother? Then, as thine,
Guard with a reverent fear this power divine.

And if, indeed, 't is not the outward state,
But temper of the Soul, by which we rate
Sadness or joy, e'en let thy bosom move
With noble thoughts, and wake thee into love;
And let each feeling in thy breast be given
An honest aim, which, sanctified by Heaven,
And springing into act, new life imparts,
Till beats thy frame as with a thousand hearts.

Sin clouds the mind's clear vision; man, not earth,
Around the self-starved Soul has spread a dearth.
The earth is full of life: the living Hand
Touched it with life; and all its forms expand
With principles of being made to suit
Man's varied powers, and raise him from the brute.
And shall the earth of higher ends be full, —
Earth which thou tread'st, — and thy poor mind be dull?
Thou talk of life, with half thy soul asleep!
Thou "living dead man," let thy spirits leap
Forth to the day; and let the fresh air blow
Thro' thy soul's shut-up mansion. Wouldst thou know

Something of what is life, shake off this death;
Have thy soul feel the universal breath
With which all nature 's quick, and learn to be
Sharer in all that thou dost touch or see;
Break from thy body's grasp, thy spirit's trance;
Give thy Soul air, thy faculties expanse;
Love, joy, e'en sorrow, — yield thyself to all!
They make thy freedom, groveller, not thy thrall.
Knock off the shackles which thy spirit bind
To dust and sense, and set at large the mind!
Then move in sympathy with God's great whole;
And be, like man at first, A LIVING SOUL!

Though nothing once, and born but yesterday,
Like Him who knows nor ending nor decay,
So shalt thou live, my Soul, immortal one!
Strong as the firm, the dread, eternal throne,
Endless as God, who sits for aye thereon.

Infinite Father! shall thy creature dare
Look forth, and say, Eternity I share
With Him who made me? May he forward send
His thoughts, and say, Like God, I know no end? —
Stretch onward, age on age, till mind grows dim,
Yet, conscious, cry, There still am I with Him?
Worm of the dust! thought almost blasphemy!
Dread glory! — I, like God, shall ever be!

O Goodness searchless! Thou who once didst walk
With man on earth, with man familiar talk,

Bringing Thyself to him, to lead the way
From darkness up to glory and to day,
Uniting with our form, that man, when blind
To all but sense, the high intent might find
Of his own soul, his never-dying mind, —
Teach us, in this thy Sacrifice, to see
Thy love, — our worth, in this great mystery.

Poorly of his own nature he must deem, —
His very immortality a dream, —
Whose God 's so strange He may not condescend
With his own last and greatest work to blend;
But rather his lost creatures must forsake,
Than deign to dwell with that He deigned to make.
Though veiled in flesh, did God his glory hide?
God counts not glory thus, but human pride.

Debased by sin, and used to things of sense,
How shall man's spirit rise and travel hence,
Where lie the Soul's pure regions without bounds,
The mind at large, where passion ne'er confounds
Clear thought, and thought is sight,—the far brings nigh,
Calls up the deep, and, now, calls down the high.

Cast off thy slough, and send thy spirit forth
Up to the Infinite, then know thy worth.
With That, be infinite; with Love, be love;
Angel, 'mid angel throngs that move above, —
Ay, more than Angel; nearer the great Cause,
Through his redeeming power, now read his laws, —
Nor with thy earthly mind, that half detects
Something of outward things by slow effects;

Viewing creative causes, learn to know
The hidden springs, nor guess, as here below,
Laws, purposes, relations, sympathies,
In errours vain: Clear Truth 's in yonder skies.

Creature all grandeur, son of truth and light,
Up from the dust! the last great day is bright, —
Bright on the Holy Mountain, round the Throne,
Bright where in borrowed light the far stars shone.
Look down! the Depths are bright! — and hear them cry,
"Light! light!" — Look up! 't is rushing down from high!
Regions on regions, far away they shine:
'T is light ineffable, 't is light divine!
"Immortal light, and life for evermore,"
Off through the deeps is heard from shore to shore
Of rolling worlds! — Man, wake thee from the sod;
Awake from death! awake, and live with God!

THE HUSBAND AND WIFE'S GRAVE.

Husband and wife! No converse now ye hold,
As once ye did in your young day of love,
On its alarms, its anxious hours, delays,
Its silent meditations and glad hopes,
Its fears, impatience, quiet sympathies;
Nor do ye speak of joy assured, and bliss
Full, certain, and possessed. Domestic cares
Call you not now together. Earnest talk
On what your children may be moves you not.
Ye lie in silence, and an awful silence;
Not like to that in which ye rested once
Most happy, — silence eloquent, when heart
With heart held speech, and your mysterious frames,
Harmonious, sensitive, at every beat
Touched the soft notes of love.
A stillness deep,
Insensible, unheeding, folds you round;
And darkness, as a stone, has sealed you in;
Away from all the living, here ye rest:
In all the nearness of the narrow tomb,
Yet feel ye not each other's presence now:
Dread fellowship! — together, yet alone.

Is this thy prison-house, thy grave, then, Love?
And doth death cancel the great bond that holds
Commingling spirits? Are thoughts that know no bounds,
But, self-inspired, rise upward, searching out
The Eternal Mind, the Father of all thought, —
Are they become mere tenants of a tomb? —
Dwellers in darkness, who the illuminate realms
Of uncreated light have visited and lived? —
Lived in the dreadful splendour of that throne,
Which One, with gentle hand the veil of flesh
Lifting that hung 'twixt man and it, revealed
In glory? — throne, before which even now
Our souls, moved by prophetic power, bow down
Rejoicing, yet at their own natures awed? —
Souls that Thee know by a mysterious sense,
Thou awful, unseen Presence, — are they quenched?
Or burn they on, hid from our mortal eyes
By that bright day which ends not, as the sun
His robe of light flings round the glittering stars?

And do our loves all perish with our frames?
Do those that took their root and put forth buds,
And their soft leaves unfolded in the warmth
Of mutual hearts, grow up and live in beauty,
Then fade and fall, like fair, unconscious flowers?
Are thoughts and passions that to the tongue give speech,
And make it send forth winning harmonies, —
That to the cheek do give its living glow,
And vision in the eye the soul intense
With that for which there is no utterance, —

Are these the body's accidents? — no more? —
To live in it, and when that dies, go out
Like the burnt taper's flame?

O, listen, man!
A voice within us speaks the startling word,
"Man, thou shalt never die!" Celestial voices
Hymn it around our souls; according harps,
By angel fingers touched when the mild stars
Of morning sang together, sound forth still
The song of our great immortality;
Thick-clustering orbs, and this our fair domain,
The tall, dark mountains, and the deep-toned seas,
Join in this solemn, universal song.
O, listen, ye, our spirits; drink it in
From all the air! 'T is in the gentle moonlight;
Is floating in day's setting glories; Night,
Wrapped in her sable robe, with silent step
Comes to our bed and breathes it in our ears:
Night and the dawn, bright day and thoughtful eve,
All time, all bounds, the limitless expanse,
As one great mystic instrument, are touched
By an unseen, living Hand, and conscious chords
Quiver with joy in this great jubilee.
The dying hear it; and as sounds of earth
Grow dull and distant, wake their passing souls
To mingle in this heavenly harmony.

Why is it that I linger round this tomb?
What holds it? Dust that cumbered those I mourn.
They shook it off, and laid aside earth's robes,
And put on those of light. They 're gone to dwell
In love, — their God's and angels'. Mutual love,

That bound them here, no longer needs a speech
For full communion; nor sensations strong,
Within the breast, their prison, strive in vain
To be set free, and meet their kind in joy.
Changed to celestials, thoughts that rise in each,
By natures new impart themselves, though silent.
Each quickening sense, each throb of holy love,
Affections sanctified, and the full glow
Of being, which expand and gladden one,
By union all mysterious, thrill and live
In both immortal frames: — Sensation all,
And thought, pervading, mingling sense and thought!
Ye paired, yet one! wrapt in a consciousness
Twofold, yet single, — this is love, this life!

Why call we, then, the square-built monument,
The upright column, and the low-laid slab,
Tokens of death, memorials of decay?
Stand in this solemn, still assembly, man,
And learn thy proper nature; for thou seest,
In these shaped stones and lettered tables, figures
Of life. Then be they to thy soul as those
Which he who talked on Sinai's mount with God
Brought to the old Judeans, — types are these
Of thine eternity.

I thank Thee, Father,
That at this simple grave on which the dawn
Is breaking, emblem of that day which hath
No close, Thou kindly unto my dark mind
Hast sent a sacred light, and that away
From this green hillock, whither I had come
In sorrow, Thou art leading me in joy.

THE DYING RAVEN.

Come to these lonely woods to die alone?
It seems not many days since thou wast heard,
From out the mists of spring, with clamorous note,
Calling upon thy mates, — and their clear answers.
The earth was brown then, and the infant leaves
Had not put forth to warm them in the sun,
Or play in the fresh air of heaven. Thy voice,
Shouting in triumph, told of winter gone,
And, prophesying life to the sealed ground,
Did make me glad with thoughts of coming beauties.
And now they 're all around me, — offspring bright
Of earth, a mother, who, with constant care,
Doth feed and clothe them all. Now o'er her fields,
In blessed bands, or single, they are gone;
Or by her brooks they stand, and sip the stream;
Or peering o'er it, — vanity well feigned, —
At quaint approval seem to glow and nod
At their reflected graces. Morn to meet,
They in fantastic labours pass the night,
Catching its dews, and rounding silvery drops
To deck their bosoms. There, on high, bald trees,
From varnished cells some peep, and the old boughs

Make to rejoice and dance in warmer winds.
Over my head the winds and they make music;
And grateful, in return for what they take,
Bright hues and odours to the air they give.

Thus mutual love brings mutual delight,—
Brings beauty, life; for love is life, — hate, death.

Thou Prophet of so fair a revelation!
Thou who abod'st with us the winter long,
Enduring cold or rain, and shaking oft
From thy dark mantle falling sleet or snow,—
Thou, who, with purpose kind, when warmer days
Shone on the earth, 'mid thaw and steam cam'st forth
From rocky nook, or wood, thy priestly cell,
To speak of comfort unto lonely man,—
Didst say to him, though seemingly alone
'Mid wastes and snows, and silent, lifeless trees,
Or the more silent ground, it was not death,
But nature's sleep and rest, her kind repair;
That thou, albeit unseen, didst bear with him
The winter's night, and, patient of the day,
And cheered by hope, (instinct divine in thee,)
Waitedst return of summer.

More thou saidst,
Thou Priest of Nature, Priest of God, to man!
Thou spok'st of Faith, (than instinct no less sure,)
Of spirits near him, though he saw them not;
Thou bad'st him ope his intellectual eye,
And see his solitude all populous;
Thou show'dst him Paradise and deathless flowers;

And didst him pray to listen to the flow
Of living waters.

Preacher to man's spirit!
Emblem of Hope! Companion! Comforter!
Thou faithful one! is this thine end? 'T was thou,
When summer birds were gone, and no form seen
In the void air, who cam'st, living and strong,
On thy broad, balanced pennons, through the winds.
And of thy long enduring, this the close?
Thou Conqueror of Storms, thy kingly strength
Thus low brought down?
The year's mild, cheering dawn
Shone out on thee, a momentary light.
The gales of spring upbore thee for a day,
And then forsook thee. Thou art fallen now;
And liest among thy hopes and promises —
Beautiful flowers and freshly springing blades —
Gasping thy life out. Here for thee the grass
Tenderly makes a bed, and the young buds
In silence open their fair, painted folds;
To ease thy pain, the one, — to cheer thee, these.
But thou art restless; and thy once keen eye
Is dull and sightless now. New-blooming boughs,
Needlessly kind, have spread a tent for thee.
Thy mate is calling to the white, piled clouds,
And asks for thee. They give no answer back.
As I look up to their bright angel faces,
Intelligent and capable of voice
They seem to me. Their silence to my soul
Comes ominous. The same to thee, doomed bird,
Silence or sound: For thee there is no sound,

No silence. Near thee stands the shadow, Death.
And now he slowly draws his sable veil
Over thine eyes; thy senses softly lulls
Into unconscious slumbers. The airy call
Thou 'lt hear no longer; 'neath sun-lighted clouds,
With beating wing, or steady poise aslant,
Wilt sail no more. Around thy trembling claws
Droop thy wings' parting feathers. Spasms of death
Are on thee.

Laid thus low by age? Or is 't
All-grudging man has brought thee to this end?
Perhaps the slender hair, so subtly wound
Around the grain God gives thee for thy food,
Has proved thy snare, and makes thine inward pain.

I needs must mourn for thee. For I, who have
No fields, nor gather into garners, — I
Bear thee both thanks and love, not fear nor hate.

And now, farewell! The falling leaves ere long
Will give thee decent covering. Till then,
Thine own black plumage, that will now no more
Glance to the sun, nor flash upon my eyes,
Like armour of steeled knight of Palestine,
Must be thy pall. Nor will it moult so soon
As sorrowing thoughts on those borne from him fade
In living man.

Who scoffs these sympathies,
Makes mock of the divinity within;
Nor feels he gently breathing through his soul

The universal spirit. Hear it cry, —
How does thy pride abase thee, man, vain man!
How deaden thee to universal love,
And joy of kindred with all humble things, —
God's creatures all!

And surely it is so.
He who the lily clothes in simple glory,
He who doth hear the ravens cry for food,
Hath on our hearts, with hand invisible,
In signs mysterious, written what alone
Our hearts may read. — Death bring thee rest, poor Bird.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPISTLE.

WRITTEN WHILE RECOVERING FROM SEVERE ILLNESS.

No more, my friend,
A weary ear I urge you lend
My tale of sickness, aches I 've borne
From closing day to breaking morn, —
Long wintry nights and days of pain, —
Sharp pain. 'T is past; and I would fain
My languor cheer with grateful thought
On Him who to this frame has brought
Soothing and rest; who — when there rose
Within my bosom's dull repose
A troubled memory of wrong
Done in health's day, when passions strong
Swayed me — repentance spoke and peace,
Hope, and from dark remorse release.

Lonely, in thought, I travelled o'er
Days past, and joys to come no more;
Sat watching the low beating fire,
And saw its flames shoot up, expire,

Like cheerful thoughts that glance their light
Athwart the mind, and, then, 't is night.
For ever night? — The Eternal One,
With sacred fire from forth his throne,
Has touched my heart. O, fail it not
When days of health shall be my lot!

Beside me, Patience, suffering's child,
With gentle voice and aspect mild,
Sat chanting to me song so holy,
A song to soothe my melancholy;
Won me to learn of her to bear
Sorrows, and pains, and all that wear
Our hearts, — me, chained by sickness, taught,
Prisoner to none the free of thought:
A truth sublime, but slowly learned
By one who for earth's freshness yearned.

From open air and ample sky
Pent up, — thus doomed for days to lie, —
'T was trial hard to me, a stranger
To long confinement, me, a ranger
Through bare or leafy wood, o'er hill,
O'er field, by shore, or by the rill,
When taking hues from bending flowers,
Or stealing dark by crystal bowers
Built up by winter, on its bank,
Of branches shot from vapour dank;
And hard to sit, and see boys slide
O'er crusted plain stretched smooth and wide,
Or down the steep and shining drift,
With shout and call, shoot light and swift.

But I could stand at set of sun,
And see the snow he shone upon
Change to a path of glory, — see
The rainbow hues 'twixt him and me, —
Orange, and green, and golden light.
I thought on that celestial sight,
That city seen by aged John,
City with walls of precious stone.
Brighter and brighter grew the road
'Twixt me and the descending god;
And while I yearned to tread its length,
Down went the Sun in all his strength.

And gone his path, like the steps of light
By angels trod at dead of night,
While Jacob slept. Around my room
The shadows deepen; while the gloom
Visits my soul, in converse high
Lifted but now, when heaven was nigh.

Why could not I, in spirit, raise
Pillar of Bethel to His praise
Who blessed me, and free worship pay,
Like Isaac's son upon his way?
Are holy thoughts but happy dreams
Chased by despair, as starry gleams
By clouds? — Nay, turn, and read thy mind;
Nay, look on Nature's face, and find
Kind, gentle graces, thoughts to raise
The tired spirit, — hope and praise.

O, kind to me, in darkest hour
She led me forth, with gentle power,

From lonely thought, from sad unrest,
To peace of mind, and to her breast
The son, who always loved her, pressed;
Called up the moon to cheer me; laid
Its silver light on bank and glade,
And bade it throw mysterious beams
O'er ice-clad hill, which steely gleams
Sent back, a knight who took his rest,
His burnished shield above his breast.
The fence of long, rough rails, that went
O'er trackless snows, a beauty lent;
Glittered each cold and icy bar
Beneath the moon, like shafts of war.
And there a lovely tracery
Of branch and twig that naked tree
Of shadows soft and dim has wove,
And spread so gently, that above
The pure white snow it seems to float
Lighter than that celestial boat,
The silver-beaked moon, on air, —
Lighter than feathery gossamer;
As if its darkening touch, through fear,
It held from thing so saintly clear.

Thus Nature threw her beauties round me;
Thus from the gloom in which she found me,
She won me by her simple graces,
She wooed me with her happy faces.

The day is closed; and I refrain
From further talk. But if of pain

It has beguiled a weary hour,
If to my desert mind, like shower
That wets the parching earth, has come
A cheerful thought, and made its home
With me awhile, a friend may share,
Who feels with me in ills I bear.

THE PLEASURE-BOAT.

Come, hoist the sail, the fast let go!
They 're seated side by side;
Wave chases wave in pleasant flow;
The bay is fair and wide.

The ripples lightly tap the boat.
Loose! Give her to the wind!
She shoots ahead; they 're all afloat;
The strand is far behind.

No danger reach so fair a crew!
Thou goddess of the foam,
I 'll ever pay thee worship due,
If thou wilt bring them home.

Fair ladies, fairer than the spray
The prow is dashing wide,
Soft breezes take you on your way,
Soft flow the blessed tide!

O, might I like those breezes be,
And touch that arching brow,
I 'd dwell for ever on the sea
Where ye are floating now.

The boat goes tilting on the waves;
The waves go tilting by;
There dips the duck, — her back she laves;
O'erhead the sea-gulls fly.

Now, like the gulls that dart for prey,
The little vessel stoops;
Now, rising, shoots along her way,
Like them, in easy swoops.

The sunlight falling on her sheet,
It glitters like the drift,
Sparkling, in scorn of summer's heat,
High up some mountain rift.

The winds are fresh; she 's driving fast
Upon the bending tide;
The crinkling sail, and crinkling mast,
Go with her side by side.

Why dies the breeze away so soon?
Why hangs the pennant down?
The sea is glass; the sun at noon. —
Nay, lady, do not frown; —

For, see, the winged fisher's plume
  Is painted on the sea:
Below, a cheek of lovely bloom.
  Whose eyes look up at thee?

She smiles; thou need'st must smile on her.
  And, see, beside her face
A rich, white cloud that doth not stir:
  What beauty, and what grace!

And pictured beach of yellow sand,
  And peaked rock, and hill,
Change the smooth sea to fairy land:
  How lovely and how still!

From that far isle the thresher's flail
  Strikes close upon the ear;
The leaping fish, the swinging sail
  Of yonder sloop, sound near.

The parting sun sends out a glow
  Across the placid bay,
Touching with glory all the show.—
  A breeze! Up helm! Away!

Careening to the wind, they reach,
  With laugh and call, the shore.
They 've left their foot-prints on the beach,
  But them I hear no more.

THE EARLY SPRING BROOK.

Wellnigh a year, swift-running Brook, is past
  Since I, upon thy fresh green side,
  Stood here, and saw thy waters glide,
But not, as now they flow, rough, turbid, fast.

'T was twilight then; and Dian hung her bow
  Low down the west; and there a star
  Kindly on thee and me, from far,
Looked out, and blessed us through the passing glow.

A goodly fellowship of day and night;
  The day, the moon, the stars, in one, —
  Night scarcely come, day scarcely gone, —
In mutual love they shed harmonious light.

It fell in peace upon thy face, fair Brook, —
  The glittering starlight, paler moon,
  Day's last, warm glow: but that full soon
Faded, e'en while I stood to feel and look.

And then thy tiny beach, no longer red,
Took from the other lamps its hue,
As star on star, in order due,
Came out and lighted up thy pebbly bed.

The ground-bird in thy bank had made her nest.
She sat and dreamed about her brood,
And where next day to gather food;
And with thy song well soothed, she took her rest.

It pained me that my footsteps caused her fear;
For I had come with weary heart
To sit with her and take a part
In star and moon, and thy low song to hear.

Fly not the broken-hearted, bird! I crave
Thy innocence, thy gentle trust.
Chirp by me now, and when I'm dust,
Come, make thy habitation by my grave.

So wished I then; and more my spirit spoke;
And hopes and wishes, mingling, said,
Thou shalt within thy grave be laid
Ere other spring return: — my heart was broke.

Yet still, more sad and lonely, here I tread
Thy banks again, unfettered Brook.
Now, by the living I'm forsook:
Before, I mourned your loss alone, ye dead.

The cords of sympathy nigh all untied!
And when I raise an eye by chance,
The half-hid sneer, the sidelong glance,
Say, Not of us! — Would I had long since died!

And those of hearts of all too gentle mould
To pain the pained, by silence say,
We ne'er can walk the selfsame way!
And shake them loose, where all my hopes took hold.

Why, I can bear hot anger and the frown, —
Much better far than feigned regard, —
I mind them not; they make me hard:
But severed and yet kind! — it weighs me down.

Come, teach me patience, then, O Thou, for whom
I take this sorrow to my breast;
Speak to me, give my spirit rest,
And make me ready for the last great doom.

Here, too, there has been sadness since that I
Last talked with thee. Thy banks were green.
Bright reeds and flowers no more are seen.
And where are they? Alas! do they, too, die?

Thou then wast all o'er beauty, softness, youth;
In self-wove garments mad'st thee gay;
Didst play and dance by night and day;
But now! — How simple nature teaches truth!

Thy cold, damp, frost-bound bank is like a rock;
Thy green, unsightly brown; and bare
The stems that made and took a share
Of beauty with thee: — all have felt the shock.

A frost like death came in, and changed the face
Of tree and herb. Up rose the wind,
And loud and strong, with fury blind,
Broke through, nor of thy beauty left a trace.

Awhile it roared; the faded leaves it tossed,
Then dashed them in thy face in scorn;
'T is I, it said, thy bowers have torn!
And, rushing on, far in the woods was lost.

Thus ended thy bright festival. Thy hall, —
The place of song and dance before, —
Silent, and barred its icy door;
And o'er thee winter threw his cold, white pall.

Its folds unwrapped, thy doors now open thrown,
Drops from the shelving ice fall fast;
The light, too, shining in at last,
Shows straws and leaves along thy bottom strown.

But soon thy channel will again run clear;
Along thy clean and pebbly bed
The spring-flowers on thy brim be fed,
And earth's and thy own music thou shalt hear.

Thou 'lt be too merry then to mind the sigh
Heaved by the lonely, broken heart,
Though near thee. Here, then, let us part,
For there 's no spring for joys like mine, that die.

The blasted spirit of fond, thoughtful men
Can feel no second earthly youth:
Their sorrows share the strength of truth. —
At leaf-fall, Brook, I 'll visit thee again.

"THE CHANTING CHERUBS."

This group, executed by Horatio Greenough, for J. Fenimore Cooper, gives you a feeling of unmingled happiness as you cast your eyes upon it. The two little creatures are themselves instinct with it; and no sadness creeps over your spirit, as it does when you look upon a child; for then comes in the thought of frailty; and you know that when the sun opens *that* bud, the dew of its youth will dry up, and that it will fade soon, and its freshness and odour be lost. But these little beings seem to have lighted here from a better world, where happiness is as lasting as it is pure. And so busy and pleased are they in their song of praise, as not to heed us poor creatures, who stand gazing on them, — blessed spirits!

The execution of this group is not inferior to the conception. Mr. Greenough shows himself to be a close student of nature, and to have a hand as true as his eye. What flesh, too! you are almost persuaded that it will yield to your touch. The action, also, and the dependent attitude of the younger Cherub are beautifully contrasted with the more erect posture and the *repose* of the older figure. Not the least pleasing thought connected with this work of art is, that, while so many men of genius disgrace themselves by envyings and detraction, this group was executed by the first American Sculptor, for one who, with Charles Brockden Brown, stands at the head of American Novelists.

It is a sin against God, and a base vice, to envy another his excellence. If man would remember and feel the words, It is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: he would be humble, and able to rejoice in another's well-doing.

I.

Whence come ye, Cherubs? from the moon?
Or from a shining star?
Ye, sure, are sent, a blessed boon,
From kinder worlds afar;
For while I look, my heart is all delight:
Earth has no creatures half so pure and bright.

II.

From moon nor star we hither flew;
The moon doth wane away, —
The stars, they pale at morning dew:
We 're children of the day;
Nor change, nor night, was ever ours to bear;
Eternal light, and love, and joy, we share.

III.

Then, sons of light, from Heaven above,
Some blessed news ye bring.
Come ye to chant eternal love,
And tell how angels sing,
And in your breathing, conscious forms to show,
How purer forms above live, breathe, and glow?

IV.

Our parent is a human mind;
His winged thoughts are we;
To sun nor stars are we confined:
We pierce the deepest sea.
Moved by a brother's call, our Father bade
Us light on earth: and here our flight is stayed.

THE MOSS SUPPLICATETH FOR THE POET.

Though I am humble, slight me not,
  But love me for the Poet's sake;
Forget me not till he 's forgot;
  For care or slight with him I take.

For oft he passed the blossoms by,
  And turned to me with kindly look;
Left flaunting flowers and open sky,
  And wooed me by the shady brook.

And like the brook his voice was low:
  So soft, so sad the words he spoke,
That with the stream they seemed to flow:
  They told me that his heart was broke.

They said the world he fain would shun,
  And seek the still and twilight wood, —
His spirit, weary of the sun,
  In humblest things found chiefest good;

That I was of a lowly frame,
And far more constant than the flower,
Which, vain with many a boastful name,
But fluttered out its idle hour;

That I was kind to old decay,
And wrapped it softly round in green
On naked root, and trunk of gray,
Spread out a garniture and screen.

They said, that he was withering fast,
Without a sheltering friend like me;
That on his manhood fell a blast,
And left him bare, like yonder tree;

That spring would clothe his boughs no more,
Nor ring his boughs with song of bird, —
Sounds like the melancholy shore
Alone were through his branches heard.

Methought, as then he stood to trace
The withered stems, there stole a tear, —
That I could read in his sad face,
Brothers, our sorrows make us near.

And then he stretched him all along,
And laid his head upon my breast,
Listening the water's peaceful song: —
How glad was I to tend his rest!

Then happier grew his soothed soul;
He turned and watched the sunlight play
Upon my face, as in it stole,
Whispering, Above is brighter day!

He praised my varied hues, — the green,
The silver hoar, the golden, brown;
Said, Lovelier hues were never seen;
Then gently pressed my tender down.

And where I sent up little shoots,
He called them trees, in fond conceit:
Like silly lovers in their suits
He talked, his care awhile to cheat.

I said, I 'd deck me in the dews,
Could I but chase away his care,
And clothe me in a thousand hues,
To bring him joys that I might share.

He answered, earth no blessing had
To cure his lone and aching heart;
That I was one, when he was sad,
Oft stole him from his pain, in part.

But e'en from thee, he said, I go,
To meet the world, its care and strife,
No more to watch this quiet flow,
Or spend with thee a gentle life.

And yet the brook is gliding on,
And I, without a care, at rest,
While he to toiling life is gone;
Nor finds his head a faithful breast.

Deal gently with him, world, I pray;
Ye cares, like softened shadows come;
His spirit, wellnigh worn away,
Asks with ye but awhile a home.

O, may I live, and when he dies
Be at his feet a humble sod;
O, may I lay me where he lies,
To die when he awakes in God!

A CLUMP OF DAISIES.

I.

Ye daisies gay,
This fresh spring day
Close gathered here together,
To play in the light,
To sleep all the night,
To abide through the sullen weather;

II.

Ye creatures bland,
A simple band,
Ye free ones, linked in pleasure,
And linked when your forms
Stoop low in the storms,
And the rain comes down without measure;

III.

When wild clouds fly
Athwart the sky,
And ghostly shadows, glancing,
Are darkening the gleam
Of the hurrying stream,
And your close, bright heads gayly dancing;

IV.

Though dull awhile,
Again ye smile;
For, see, the warm sun breaking;
The stream 's going glad,
There 's nothing now sad,
And the small bird his song is waking.

V.

The dew-drop sip
With dainty lip!
The sun is low descended.
And, Moon! softly fall
On troop true and small!
Sky and earth in one kindly blended.

VI.

And, Morning! spread
Their jewelled bed
With lights in the east sky springing!
And, Brook! breathe around
Thy low murmured sound!
May they move, ye Birds, to your singing!

VII.

For in their play
I hear them say,
Here, man, thy wisdom borrow;
In heart be a child,
In word, true and mild:
Hold thy faith, come joy, or come sorrow.

CHANTREY'S WASHINGTON.

> And thou art home again in marble!
> Remembered be thy name in poets' story,
> Who led the land through fire and blood to glory; —
> Our Father, next to Him in heaven!

Father and Chief, how calm thou stand'st once more
Upon thine own free land, thou wonn'st with toil!
Seest thou upon thy Country's robe a soil,
As she comes down to greet thee on the shore?

For thought in that fine brow is living still, —
Such thought, as, looking far off into time,
Casting by fear, stood up in strength sublime,
When odds in war shook vale and shore and hill; —

Such thought as then possessed thee, when was laid
Our deep foundation, — when the fabric shook
With the wrathful surge which high against it broke, —
When at thy voice the blind, wild sea was stayed.

Hast heard our strivings, that thou look'st away
Into the future, pondering still our fate
With thoughtful mind? Thou readest, sure, the date
To strifes, — thou seest a glorious coming day.

For round those lips dwells sweetness, breathing good
To sad men's souls, and bidding them take heart,
Nor live the shame of those who bore their part
When round their towering chief they banded stood.

No swelling pride in that firm, ample chest!
The full rich robe falls round thee, fold on fold,
With easy grace, in thy scarce conscious hold:
How simple in thy grandeur, — strong in rest!

'T is like thee: Such repose thy living form
Wrapped round. Though some chained passion, breaking forth,
At times swept o'er thee like the fierce, dread north,
Yet calmer, nobler, cam'st thou from the storm.

O mystery past thought! that the cold stone
Should live to us, take shape, and to us speak, —
That he, in mind, in grandeur, like the Greek,
And he, our pride, stand here, the two in one!

There 's awe in thy still form. Come hither, then,
Ye that o'erthrong the land, and ye shall know
What greatness is, nor please ye in its show, —
Come, look on him, would ye indeed be men!

THE LITTLE BEACH-BIRD.

I.

Thou little bird, thou dweller by the sea,
Why takest thou its melancholy voice,
And with that boding cry
Along the breakers fly?
O, rather, Bird, with me
Through the fair land rejoice!

II.

Thy flitting form comes ghostly dim and pale,
As driven by a beating storm at sea;
Thy cry is weak and scared,
As if thy mates had shared
The doom of us: Thy wail, —
What doth it bring to me?

III.

Thou call'st along the sand, and haunt'st the surge,
Restless and sad; as if, in strange accord
With the motion and the roar
Of waves that drive to shore,
One spirit did ye urge, —
The Mystery, — the Word.

IV.

Of thousands, thou, both sepulchre and pall,
Old Ocean! A requiem o'er the dead,
From out thy gloomy cells,
A tale of mourning tells, —
Tells of man's woe and fall,
His sinless glory fled.

V.

Then turn thee, little Bird, and take thy flight
Where the complaining sea shall sadness bring
Thy spirit never more;
Come, quit with me the shore,
And on the meadows light,
Where birds for gladness sing!

GREENOUGH'S STATUE OF MEDORA.

Medora, wake! — nay, do not wake!
I would not stir that placid brow,
Nor lift those lids, though light should break
Warm from the twin blue heavens that lie below.

Sleep falls on thee, as on the streams
The summer moon. Touched by its might,
The soul comes out in loving dreams,
And wraps thy delicate form in living light.

Thou art not dead! — These flowers say
That thou, though more thou heed'st them not,
Didst rear them once for him away,
Then loose them in thy hold like things forgot,

And lay thee here where thou might'st weep, —
That Death but hushed thee to repose,
As mothers tend their infants' sleep,
And watch their eyelids falter, open, close, —

That here thy heart hath found release,
Thy sorrows all are gone away,
Or touched by something almost peace,
Like night's last shadows by the gleaming day.

When he who gave thee form is gone,
And I within the earth shall lie,
Thou still shalt slumber softly on,
Too fair to live, too beautiful to die.

TO A GARDEN-FLOWER

SENT ME BY A LADY.

No, not in woods, nor fells, nor pastures wild,
Nor left alone to changeful nature's care,
You opened on the light and breathed the air;
But one with blush like thine, and look as mild
As dewed morn, with love all undefiled,
Chose out a kindly spot, and made thy bed
Safe from the cruel blast and heedless tread,
And watched thy birth, and took thee for her child.
And human hands solicitous have trained
Thy slender stalk, and eyes on thee have dwelt
Radiant with thought, and human feelings rained
Into thy bosom, e'en till thou hast felt
That through thy life a human virtue ran;
And now art come to greet thy fellow-man.

I SAW HER ONCE.

I saw her once! and still I see
That thoughtful eye and placid brow;
That voice, it spoke but once to me, —
That quiet voice, I hear it now!

Where'er I go, my soul is blest;
She meets me there, a cheering light,
And when I sink away to rest,
She murmurs near, Good night, good night!

Our earthly forms are far apart;
But can our spirits be so nigh,
Nor I a home within her heart?
And love but dream her fond reply?

O, no! The form that I behold, —
No shaping this of memory!
Her self, her self, is here ensouled! —
I saw her once, — and still I see!

ON RECEIVING FLOWERS,

DURING ILLNESS, FROM A LADY.

I.

I LOVED you ever, gentle flowers,
And made you playmates of my youth;
The while your spirit stole
In secret to my soul,
To shed a softness through my ripening powers,
And lead the thoughtful mind to deepest truth.

II.

And now, when weariness and pain
Had cast you almost from my breast,
With each a smiling face,
In all your simple grace,
You come once more to take me back again
From pain to ease, from weariness to rest.

III.

Kind visitants, through my sick room
You seem to breathe an air of health,
And with your looks of joy
To wake again the boy,
And to the pallid cheek restore its bloom,
And o'er the desert mind pour bounteous wealth.

IV.

And whence you came, by brimming stream,
'Neath rustling leaves with birds within,
Again I musing tread, —
Forgot my restless bed
And long, sick hours: — Too short the blessed dream!
I wake to pain and all the city's din.

V.

But time nor pain shall ever steal
Or youth or beauty from my mind; —
And, blessings on you, flowers!
Though few with me your hours,
The youth, and beauty, and the heart to feel
In her who sent you ye will leave behind!

THE DEATH OF WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

I LOOK through tears on Beauty now;
And Beauty's self less radiant looks on me;
Serene, yet touched with sadness is the brow,
Once bright with joy, I see.

Joy-waking Beauty, why so sad?
Tell where the radiance of the smile is gone,
At which my heart, and earth, and skies were glad, —
That linked us all in one.

It is not on the mountain's breast;
It comes not to me with the dawning day;
Nor looks it from the glories of the west,
As slow they pass away.

Nor on those gliding roundlets bright,
That steal their play among the woody shades,
Nor on thine own dear children doth it light, —
The flowers along the glades.

And altered to the Living Mind
(That great high-priestess, with her thought-born race
Who round thine altar aye have stood and shined)
The comforts of thy face.

Why shadowed thus thy forehead fair?
Why on the mind low hangs a mystic gloom,
And spreads away upon the genial air,
Like vapours from the tomb?

Why should ye shine, you lights above?
Ye little flowers, why open to the heat?
No more within the heart ye filled with love
The living pulses beat.

Well, Beauty, may you mourning stand!
The fine-beholding eye, whose constant look
Was turned on thee, is dark; and cold the hand
Gave more than vision took.

Nay, heart, be still! Of heavenly birth
Is Beauty sprung: — Look up! — behold the place!
There He, who reverent traced Her steps on earth,
Now sees Her, face to face.

DAYBREAK.

The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber, whose window opened towards the sun-rising: the name of the chamber was Peace; where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang. — *The Pilgrim's Progress.*

I.

Now, brighter than the host that all night long,
In fiery armour, far up in the sky
Stood watch, thou com'st to wait the morning's song,
Thou com'st to tell me day again is nigh,
Star of the dawning! Cheerful is thine eye;
And yet in the broad day it must grow dim.
Thou seem'st to look on me, as asking why
My mourning eyes with silent tears do swim;
Thou bidd'st me turn to God, and seek my rest in Him.

II.

Canst thou grow sad, thou sayest, as earth grows bright?
And sigh, when little birds begin discourse
In quick, low voices, ere the streaming light
Pours on their nests, from out the day's fresh source?
With creatures innocent thou must perforce
A sharer be, if that thine heart be pure.
And holy hour like this, save sharp remorse,
Of ills and pains of life must be the cure,
And breathe in kindred calm, and teach thee to endure.

III.

I feel its calm. But there 's a sombrous hue,
Edging that eastern cloud, of deep, dull red;
Nor glitters yet the cold and heavy dew;
And all the woods and hill-tops stand outspread
With dusky lights, which warmth nor comfort shed.
Still — save the bird that scarcely lifts its song —
The vast world seems the tomb of all the dead;
The silent city emptied of its throng,
And ended, all alike, grief, mirth, love, hate, and wrong.

IV.

But wrong, and hate, and love, and grief, and mirth
Will quicken soon; and hard, hot toil and strife,
With headlong purpose, shake the sleeping earth
With discord strange, and all that man calls life.
With thousand scattered beauties Nature 's rife;
And airs, and woods, and streams breathe harmonies: —
Man weds not these, but taketh art to wife;
Nor binds his heart with soft and kindly ties: —
He feverish, blinded, lives, and feverish, sated, dies.

V.

It is because man useth so amiss
Her dearest blessings, Nature seemeth sad;
Else why should she in such fresh hour as this
Not lift the veil, in revelation glad,
From her fair face? — It is that man is mad!
Then chide me not, clear Star, that I repine,
When Nature grieves; nor deem this heart is bad.
Thou look'st toward earth; but yet the heavens are thine;
While I to earth am bound: — When will the heavens
be mine?

VI.

If man would but his finer nature learn,
And not in life fantastic lose the sense
Of simpler things; could Nature's features stern
Teach him be thoughtful, then, with soul intense,
I should not yearn for God to take me hence,
But bear my lot, albeit in spirit bowed,
Remembering humbly why it is, and whence:
But when I see cold man of reason proud,
My solitude is sad, — I 'm lonely in the crowd.

VII.

But not for this alone the silent tear
Steals to mine eyes, while looking on the morn,
Nor for this solemn hour: fresh life is near;
But all my joys, — they died when newly born.
Thousands will wake to joy; while I, forlorn,
And like the stricken deer, with sickly eye
Shall see them pass. Breathe calm, — my spirit 's torn;
Ye holy thoughts, lift up my soul on high!
Ye hopes of things unseen, the far-off world bring nigh!

VIII.

And when I grieve, O, rather let it be
That I, — whom Nature taught to sit with her
On her proud mountains, by her rolling sea, —
Who, when the winds are up, with mighty stir
Of woods and waters, feel the quickening spur
To my strong spirit, — who, as my own child,
Do love the flower, and in the ragged bur
A beauty see, — that I this mother mild
Should leave, and go with care, and passions fierce and wild!

IX.

How suddenly that straight and glittering shaft
Shot 'thwart the earth! In crown of living fire
Up comes the Day! As if they conscious quaffed
The sunny flood, hill, forest, city, spire,
Laugh in the wakening light. — Go, vain desire!
The dusky lights are gone; go thou thy way!
And pining discontent, like them, expire!
Be called my chamber PEACE, when ends the day;
And let me with the dawn, like PILGRIM, sing and pray.

NOTES.

Preface to "The First Edition of the Poems." — The felicity and truth of Lord Byron's expression, in relation to the octo-syllabic verse, (quoted by me in the last paragraph but one of the Preface,) left that expression impressed upon my mind after the exception made by him was so far forgotten, that, when reminded of it by some newspaper notice of my poems, I knew not where to turn to in Byron for the passage. Having since found it, I give it entire: — "Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius."

After this opinion from a great modern master of English verse respecting that wonderful man, it may be thought that it would have become me better to have altogether omitted, at this time, the passage in the Preface. And I would gladly have done so, could I have done it honestly after my oversight, and while my convictions remained unchanged. The newspaper notice to which I have referred, and which the passage in Byron has kept in my mind, insinuates, if I rightly recollect, that I used so much of Byron as made for my opinion, and purposely omitted the rest. Had the writer of that article known me, he would not have said this; and, not knowing me, he should not have presumed it.

As this is a question of fair-dealing with the reader, I need make no apology for the length of the note.

Page 8, *stanza* 14. — In that passage in Lycidas, which fills us with such awe, Milton says: —

> "The great Vision of the guarded mount
> Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold."

Although the cases are not quite parallel, I hope I shall not be thought extravagant in calling upon old Merlin to

"Hear the shout *from Spain*."

Page 60. — It has been suggested to me that my allusion to the story of "Pedler Stout" may not be understood by those born since my nursery days. Were it not too long, I would insert it here, for the benefit of such persons. The effect which the Pedler's treatment had upon the little egg-woman, (the nature of which treatment my allusion will sufficiently explain,) in leading her to question herself upon her personal identity; the means which she took to solve so important a question; and the melancholy conclusion to which these brought her, that she was *not herself*, or, to use her own words, —

"Sure, this is none of I!" —

all serve to render it, not only a tale of deep interest to the general reader, but also one well worthy the study of philosophers in the high matters of Self-consciousness and the *Ego*, at the present day.

THE IDLE MAN.

How various his employments, whom the world
Calls idle !

COWPER.

PREFACE

TO THE EDITION OF 1833.

THE WRITER OF THE IDLE MAN TO HIS OLD FRIENDS: —

IT is a little more than ten years since I sent forth my last number of The Idle Man. It was the first number of an intended second volume: I had not long before closed the first volume, in these words: — "It is a pleasant thing to have our lonely labours helped on by the remembrance that they have met with kind encouragement, and by the belief that they will meet with still more." In this belief, however, I was mistaken; and I found it necessary to stop the work. It was painful to do so; for the continual *stimulus* of an interesting purpose before me kept the mind clear and active, and the spirits elastic, under the weight that pressed upon them. It is true that I had disagreeable things to encounter; — as what man has not who is somewhat newly before the public, especially if he discovers individuality of character, earnestness of feeling, and a steady reliance upon his own opinions and tastes?

I should, indeed, have been wanting to myself, had I suffered these obstructions to trouble me any further than they stopped the way to needed pecuniary success. And why should they have troubled me further? I never much affected notoriety; so there were no ambitious desires to be crossed on that road. I had the approbation of those whose opinions I had always held in honour; and what was far better and more heart-

comforting, I had their sympathy and love. Last of all, let me be allowed to say, that I could not feel such an inferiority to those who were given to fault-finding, as to be shaken in my humble trust in those powers with which God had seen fit to bless me.

I have alluded to these things, to account for a long silence, seldom broken. For though I cannot bow to a certain dictatorial manner in which the claims of the public upon the individual are now-a-days apt to be set up, yet I feel as much as any man the obligation upon each one to do, according to his ability, for that world in which the Creator has placed him.

If I should be asked what it is that encourages me to come once more before the public, notwithstanding my former disappointment, I would answer, that I am better known now than I was then, and, if I am not mistaken, proportionably more in favour; and that, although the majority are, for the present, running into physical pursuits, yet of those who keep their hold upon literature there is a rapidly increasing class, between whose speculations, opinions, and tastes, and my own, I can feel there is growing up a social and cheering agreement. And this is a delightful reflection to me; for to feel solitary, even in that which is in itself innocent, is sad, and hurts our hearts too, if we keep not a watch over them.

And, here, I would say: Let any one who has an inward conviction that he holds the truth (no matter what the subject) gather strength from thence, and feel assured, that although the multitude immediately around him, with but a few exceptions, may differ from him, yet there are still seven thousand, somewhere in Israel, who have not bowed the knee. It is not strange that the united company around us should believe themselves to be "all the world"; but it is strange that those who agree with them in little beside should ever think them so too.

I am aware that my writings may never make me what is called "a general favourite"; and if, from the study of myself and others, I had not long ago come to this conclusion, the

concern for me of some well-meaning acquaintance would ere this have led me to it.

When, for instance, I have been heard to speak of that delightful gentleman, Mr. Geoffrey Crayon, — so tender and moving, when he chooses to be so, yet so delicately blending the humorous with the sad, (a rare power, and one in which he has scarcely been surpassed,) and possessed, withal, of such winning good-nature and grace, — I have been suddenly interrupted by the question, Why don't you write a few tales like Mr. Crayon's?

And so, when I have spoken of Mr. Cooper, of his Leather Stocking, (a character hardly excelled in modern fiction, if taken in its true order through the three novels,) or, generally, of his naturalness, of his vivid and clear description, his rapid action and revelation of passion, — I have been asked, with the utmost simplicity, why I did not undertake a novel after Mr. Cooper's manner.

And what, I have replied, would Mr. Crayon have brought to pass, had he, for instance, attempted to write like that peculiar man, Charles Brockden Brown? And where would Mr. Cooper have been by this time, had he followed in the footsteps of Mr. Crayon, over smooth lawns, and by bright, prattling brooks, or the little calm-surfaced, heaven-reflecting lake?

I do much wonder whether some people ever heard of the word Idiosyncrasy. And I wonder, exclaims Mr. ——, whether they ever heard of the word Phrenology!

I know not how it may be with others; but if I am to write fiction, which shall have in it the character and the force of truth, it must, in very deed, *be* truth to me at the time.

I have left out of the present volume those articles in The Idle Man which were not from my own pen.

Separating from my own that with which my friends furnished me, is like parting with old companions. "The Hypochondriac" must here take his leave of the world for the present, and the public must give up a little more good prose, and some true poetry. But the poetry from Mr. Bryant they will not

lose; — that they will find lying amongst his other beautiful and precious things, in the work which he not long ago gave to the world.

But "The West Wind," the title of the last thing which he wrote for me, — I must part with that too. If it had been written purposely to follow "Paul Felton," it could not have been more appropriate, it breathed such a calm through one, after witnessing the struggles of that man. Beautiful as it is in itself, it will never be the same gentle air to me anywhere else; nor will the pines give out that same saddening, yet soothing murmur which they did when they grew by the graves of Paul and Esther: I wish they were growing there still!

Will my old friends allow me to close with a word to those whom I hope before long to call my young friends?

Some, who were members of one or another of our many colleges when The Idle Man appeared, have since told me, that, could I have known of the interest which was taken in it at those institutions, and the feelings it called out towards me, I should not have given it up as I did. Perhaps I should not; for I have always looked with deep interest upon the early forming of the moral and intellectual character; and the love of the young for me takes a strong hold upon my heart. And when I remember what seeds of affection and sentiment, of poetry and all spiritual aspirations, are sown in the young, to germinate, or to die, as the sun and dews may fall on them, or not, I cannot but feel a satisfaction that anything of mine should have ever so little of these unfolding influences upon them.

I shall never forget with what feeling my friend Bryant, some years ago, described to me the effect produced upon him by his meeting for the first time with Wordsworth's Ballads. He lived, when quite young, where but few works of poetry were to be had, at a period, too, when Pope was still the great idol in the Temple of *Art*. He said, that upon opening Wordsworth, a thousand springs seemed to gush up at once in his

heart, and the face of nature, of a sudden, to change into a strange freshness and life. He had felt the sympathetic touch from an according mind, and you see how instantly his powers and affections shot over the earth and through his kind. If I could, in my humble way, awaken some young man, of however inferiour powers to our delightful poet, to a sensation in any poor degree like this, I should bless God for it the remainder of my days.

Too many of the young of this time do need awakening; for this is hardly the age of profound philosophy, of lofty imagination, or of deep and simple sentiment. But although the age is generally wanting in these respects, there are a few minds of a noble order rising up, not only abroad, but even in this land; and as they ascend, I can see their intellectual rays, while I watch them at a distance, stretching out more and more; and ere long they will touch the one the other, and make a common light, that shall flood all lands. A more spiritual philosophy, perhaps, than man has before looked on, and a poetry *twin* with it, are coming into life. Yes, a day of far-spreading splendour is breaking; the clear streak of it is already in the east, and the earth, even now, here and there touched by it, and yonder, "the dawning hills"!

Why, my young friends, I well remember the time when Wordsworth — the great Wordsworth — served for little else than travesty to the witling, smartness to the reviewer, and for a sneer to the fastidious pretender to taste; and when, too, the philosophy of Coleridge was held as little better than a dream. But now, he who cannot relish Wordsworth is advised to betake himself to the Annuals; and the man who is unable to enter into the deep things of Coleridge, though he may pass for an alert dialectician, must no longer think of dictating from the philosopher's chair. To profess to differ from Coleridge may be safe, but to profess to hold him to be incomprehensible would now savour less of a profession than a confession, to be kept for the ear of some ghostly father alone.

To bring my unintentionally long letter to a close. — In

sending this volume into the world, the Prose goes forth as an elder brother, with his sister, Poetry. She, it is true, is not the child of my youth, yet not wanting, I hope, in the feelings of youth, nor altogether without sentiment and imagination, and an eye for nature, and a love of it, though lacking, I am sensible, something of that melody of voice and that harmony of expression which so win upon us unawares, and by the opposite of which finely attuned spirits are so apt to be pained.

I will not affect an indifference which I do not feel. I have an earnest desire for the success of this volume, and to that end, for a generally good opinion of it, although in estimating what is my own, as well as what belongs to others, the opinion of the many is of less weight with me than the judgement of the few.

To be liked of those whose hearts and minds I esteem would be unspeakable comfort to me, and would open sympathies with them in my nature which lie deep in the immortal part of me, and which, therefore, though beginning in time, will doubtless live on in eternity. To such hearts and minds I now humbly, but especially, commend myself.

TOM THORNTON.

And prudent counsels fled;
And bounteous Fancy, for his glowing mind,
Wrought various scenes, and all of glorious kind.
CRABBE.

— Remorse,
— defeated pride,
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,
Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,
Love with despair, or grief in agony.
WORDSWORTH.

Or to the restless sea and roaring wind
Gave the strong yearnings of a ruined mind.
CRABBE.

"WHY, Mr. Thornton, are you dreaming?" said Mrs. Thornton, trying to appear easy, and dropping in her lap her work, which she had not set a stitch to for the last half-hour. "I can't see to thread my needle, for the wick has run up till it looks like a very cock's comb, and the fire is so low that I hardly feel the end of my fingers. 'T is exceedingly chilly about the room;— pray give me my shawl, or I shall perish."

"Do as other wise people do, my dear; look back a little, and you will find your shawl on the bars of your chair. As to the candle, I will see to that; and if I could take the coxcomb from our Tom's head as easily, it would be equally well for your sight."

"Ha! ha! Now, Mr. Thornton, you should n't try to be witty when you are vexed. You don't know what bungling work angry folks make at wit."

"True, my dear, — much the same as fond ones at government."

Mr. Thornton took his feet down from the side of the fire-place, and put his spectacles on his nose, at the same time looking sharply through them, with his gray eyebrows thrown into double arches.

"Upon my word, Mr. Thornton, I 'm glad you 're at home again; for you sat there playing your spectacles between your fingers, with nothing but a gruff hum, now and then, as if you were miles off in the woods, and contriving how to clear your wild lands."

"I have enough growing wild at my own door to see to, without taking to the woods, and harder to bring into order than any soil my trees grow upon, however stubborn."

Mrs. Thornton saw that she could not rid herself of the difficulty by laughing. She coloured and remained silent. She was conscious of being too indulgent to her son; and might, perhaps, have been brought to a wiser course towards him, had not her husband's impatience of her weakness, and vehement opposition to her folly, and a consequent harshness in his bearing towards Tom, created a kind of party feeling within her, which, with a common sort of sophistry, she resolved wholly into pity for her child. This was a bad situation for the boy, for the weakness of his mother's conduct was easily perceived by him, and looked upon with a little of contempt, at the same time that it made for his convenience; while his father's sternness, which kept him in check, and which he would gladly have been rid of, commanded a qualified respect. This led

him to like what was agreeable, rather than what was right, and to lose the distinction of principle in self-gratification. And though all selfishness hardens the heart, there is no kind of it which so hardens it as a contempt for those who love us, and are fondly, though unwisely, contributing to our pleasures. To hate our enemies is not so bad as to despise our friends. The cold, hard triumph of prosperity is a worse sin than that which eats into us in the rancour of adversity;—and it is more deceptive too; for good fortune has something joyous in it, even to the morose, who oftentimes mistake their gladness for a general good-will, while they play with the miseries of some, only to make others laugh. Even vehement and inconsiderate tempers, who take fire as quickly in another's cause as in their own, lose their generosity where too much is ministered to their will; and what was only a warm resentment of another's wrong may come to be nothing else but a feeling of power and a love of victory.

Mr. Thornton saw the confused expression in his wife's face, and his sharp, sudden look relaxed into one of mild and melancholy reproach, while she sat pricking her finger, as she tried to seem intent upon hurrying on her work. He pulled out his watch, and continued looking at it some time, taking an uneasy kind of delight in seeing the minute-hand go forward, and in wishing it later.

"It is not very late, I hope, Mr. Thornton."

"O, no,—but a little past one. A very reasonable hour for a boy to be out, and at a cockfight, too."

"But, Mr. Thornton, had you heard how earnestly he importuned me, you would not wonder at my giving him leave. He promised to return early. But boys,

you know, never think of time when about their amusements."

"It is not of much consequence that they should, when their amusements are so humane and innocent. A cockpit must be an excellent school for a lad of Tom's mild disposition."

Some couples have particular points of union, but more have those of disagreement; and from the frequency with which both return to their several kinds, it would be hard to tell which affords the most pleasure.

There was but one subject on which Mr. and Mrs. Thornton were at odds with each other, but to make up for the want of more, it was one of very frequent occurrence; and had not Tom suddenly made his appearance, there is no knowing how far the bitter taunting of the old gentleman would have gone.

Tom entered the room, his crisp, black hair off his forehead, his swarthy complexion flushed with excitement from the conflict he had just witnessed, his mouth firmly set, his nostrils expanded, and his eye fiery and dilated. He had a marked cast of features, the muscles of his face worked strongly, and his motions were hasty, impetuous, and threatening. His countenance was open and manly; and it seemed to depend upon the mere turn of circumstances whether he was to make a good or a bad man. He was surprised, and a little abashed for a moment, at finding his father up. He looked at his mother, as if to say she had betrayed him; and his mother looked at him upbraidingly, for breaking his word by staying so late, and thus bringing his father's displeasure upon them both.

"I suppose that I may go to bed now, as you have seen fit to return home at last, my young gentleman?

And did you bet on the winning cock, or are you to draw on me to pay off your debt of honour?"

"I betted no higher than I had money to pay," answered Tom, proudly; "and I care not if I go with an empty pocket for a month to come, for he was a right gallant fellow I lost upon."

Angry as his father was, the careless generosity of Tom's manner touched his pride. "You are malapert. But this comes of late hours, and dissipation. We 'll have no more of it. Get you to bed, Sir; and look to it that you do not gaff the old rooster, — I 'll have no blood spilt on my grounds."

"Never, without your leave, Sir," said Tom, his mouth drawing into a smile at his father's simplicity. And, glad to be let off so easily, he went to bed, laughing at the thought of their old dunghill, blind of one eye, dying game. "They must have been but simple lads in my father's day," said Tom to himself, as he blew out his candle, and threw himself into bed to dream over the fight.

"Tom is not so bad a boy, neither," said Mr. Thornton, adjusting the fender before the fire, and preparing to go to bed. "And I see not why he should not make a proper man enough, were there no one to take all the pains in the world to spoil him."

In a few minutes all was quiet in the house.

Tom had now reached that age, in which it is pretty well determined whether the passions are to be our masters or servants. He had never thought for a moment of checking his; and if they were less violent at one time than at another, it was because he was swayed for the instant by some gentler impulse, and not that he was restrained by principle. His father's late mild treatment of him seemed to have a softening

effect upon his disposition, and for a few days he appeared at rest, and free from starts of passion. But some little incidents soon brought back his father's severity of manner, and this the son's spirit of opposition, the mother's weakness serving all the while as a temptation to his love of power. Every day occasioned a fresh difficulty. Tom decided all the disputes in the school, it mattered little with him whether by force or persuasion. And as he feared no one living, and generally sided with the weakest, partly from a love of displaying his daring and prowess, and partly from a hatred of all tyranny but his own, he frequently came home with his clothes torn, and face bloody and bruised. This, however, might be said for Tom, — he was the favourite of the smaller boys; for he cared not to domineer where it showed neither skill nor courage. His poor mother was filled with constant trembling and alarm, which served as a petty amusement to him; and from the most violent rage, after one of these contests, he often broke out into a loud laugh at the plaintive sound of his mother's lament over him.

Among Tom's other accomplishments, he was a great *whip*. So, without saying a word to any one, he contrived, with the assistance of a school-fellow as wild as himself, to put a young, fiery horse, which his father had just purchased, to a new gig. The horse was restiff. Tom grew angry and whipped him. His companion was thrown out and broke his arm; but Tom, with the usual success of the active and daring, cleared himself unhurt. The gig, however, was dashed to pieces, and his father's fine horse ruined.

Not long after this, and before his father's anger had time to cool, Tom, with some of his playmates, was concerned in breaking the windows of a miserly neigh-

bour, that they might make him loosen his purse-strings. One of the smallest boys was detected, and, upon refusing to give information of the rest, the master began flogging him severely. Tom would have taken the whipping himself, but he knew this would not save the lad, unless he made the others known. Besides, he had an utter detestation of all acts which are held by high-spirited schoolboys to be mean or cowardly, and could not brook that the little fellow should be punished for not turning traitor. Tom sprang upon his seat, and crying out, "A rescue!" was followed by the other boys; and in an instant the master was brought to the floor. Lying upon one's back is not a favourable posture for dignity, — certainly not in a schoolmaster. Though a good deal intimidated, the master frowned, and stormed, and threatened; but Tom was not to be frightened at words and looks. Indeed, the ludicrous situation of his instructer, the novelty of it, and his mock authoritative manner, put Tom into such a fit of laughter, that he could hardly utter his conditions of release. There was nothing but shouting and uproar through the school; and it was not till a promise of full pardon to all concerned that the master was allowed to rise.

Tom knew that this would end his schoolboy days, and so far he was not sorry for what had happened; for he longed to be free and abroad amid the adventures of the world. "Let it all go," said he, walking forward with a full swing; "if I have been wild and headstrong, I have not altogether wasted my time. And I'll so better my instruction, that I will one day be among men what I have been among boys. And who will dare say nay to Tom Thornton?"

As he came in sight of the house, he slackened his

pace, and forgetting his views of power, began to consider how he should meet his father.

"It will be all out in less than four-and-twenty hours, and I had better have the merit of telling it myself. This will go some way towards my pardon, for the old man, with all his severity, likes openness; — it has saved me many a whipping when I was younger. So, thou almost only virtue I possess, let me make the most of thee while thou stickest by me."

He was, indeed, a forthright lad, not because he considered openness a duty, but because it agreed with the vehemence and daring of his character, and gratified his pride.

With all his self-reliance, his heart beat quick as he drew near the door. He thought of his father's strict notions of government, his own numerous offences of late, the sternness and quickness of his father's temper, and the violence and obstinacy of his own; and he could not but dread the consequences of the meeting.

"Why should I stand like a coward, arguing the matter with myself, when I know well enough that there is but one way of acting? The sooner begun, the sooner over; the worst has an end."

So saying, he threw open the door, and went directly to his father's room. Mr. Thornton was not there. He passed as hastily from one room to another as if in pursuit of some one who was trying to escape him, inquiring quickly for his father of everybody he met. He at last went to his mother's chamber, and knocking, but scarcely waiting for an answer, entered, and asked abruptly, "Where is he?"

"Who, my dear?"

"Dear me no dears; I 'm not in a humour for it. Where 's my father?"

"Your father, child! He 's gone to the village. But what 's the matter? Something dreadful, I 'm sure. O Thomas, you make my life miserable!"

"Humph!" said Tom, drawing his lips close together. "Gone to the village! Then every old woman there has blabbed it over and over again in his ears, and with a thousand lies tagged to it, and as many malicious condolences about his hot-headed son. Nothing puts my father into such a fury as the whining of these old crones. Ah, I see the jig 's up, and all my honesty ends in nothing. Well, it can't be helped; — 't is coming."

"What can't be helped? Why don't you speak to me, Thomas, and tell me what 's the matter?"

"Ah! mother, is it you? — I was thinking about —— What 's the matter, ask you? Matter enough, truly. There 's young Star sold for a lame cart-horse, — a gallant, fiery steed you were, too, Star! — the gay, furbished gig dashed into as many fragments as your chandelier, and gone with Pharaoh's chariot-wheels, for aught I know. Mother, I 've been in too great a hurry, ever since, to ask your pardon for running foul your chandelier yesterday. But my father came in so close upon me, he liked to have cut his foot with the pieces. There 's another mark to my list of sins. Then there 's the breaking of Jack's head for not minding me instead of my father, and a score more of worse things, and all within these six days."

"O Thomas, Thomas, what will become of us?"

"Become of *us?* Why, 't is none of your doings, mother. You never broke the gig, nor lamed Star, nor cudgelled Jack, that I know of. But reserve your grief awhile, for the worst is behind."

"Worst, Thomas! I shall lose my senses. Your

father mutters about you in his very sleep; and he has threatened of late to send you out of the house, if you go on at such a rate."

"I know it. Yet I hardly think he would turn me adrift. What if he does? There is room enough; and, come fair or foul, I 've a ready hand and a stout heart."

"You will certainly kill your unhappy mother, if you talk so. Your father says your conduct is all owing to my indulgence; and you have no gratitude or pity for me."

"Faith, mother, I fear father has the right on 't. Come, come, don't make yourself miserable about such an overgrown boy as I am, and I 'll tell my story. Mother, I 'm a rebel and an outlaw; and the worst of it is, my father's notions of government are as high as the Grand Turk's. Yes, we had old pedagogue flat on his back; and he could no more turn over than a turtle. And such a sprawling as he made of it! And when we let him up, could you but have seen how he trembled, every joint of him, — knees and elbows!"

Here Tom fell a laughing, and his mother burst into tears. Though her weak fondness for her son took away from him nearly all respect for his mother, still Tom loved her, and often blamed himself severely that he had given her so much trouble, and so often brought upon her his father's displeasure. His heart was touched; and taking her hand, he asked forgiveness for trifling with her feelings. "Do not think that it is because I am careless of what concerns you. You see I play the fool with my own troubles, and I certainly am not indifferent about them."

"I know, I know, my son! But you will meet with nothing except evil in life, if you do not learn prudence

and self-control. You have a good heart, I believe; yet you are giving constant pain and anxiety to your best friends, and must, so long as your passions are your masters, and you so violent and changing."

Her son promised to set seriously about subduing his passions, and letting his reason have more sway.

As Tom conjectured, Mr. Thornton had heard the whole story, and with the usual country-village colouring. It was too much for his irascible temper, goaded, as it had been of late, by his son's inconsiderate conduct. He set off for home in great wrath, hurrying over Tom's misdeeds so rapidly and confusedly, that a dozen multiplied and changed places with such swiftness, they showed like a thousand. With his mind thus filled with blind rage, and his body fevered with the speed at which he walked, he entered the house, a very unfit subject for Tom to begin the exercise of his new resolutions upon.

Tom had seen his father coming along the road, and had gone to his room, waiting his arrival, with a determination to relate the whole affair, confess his errour in this and other instances, make known his resolution to change his conduct, and humbly ask forgiveness for the past, and all in a dutiful and composed manner.

Mr. Thornton seized the latch, but with a hand so shaking with rage that it did not rise at his touch. Heated and impatient as he was, the least thing was enough to make him furious; he thrust his foot against the door; it started the catch, and sent it half across the room. The passing sense of shame at his uncontrolled passion only increased his anger; and seeing his son standing in the middle of the room, — "Blockhead," he cried, darting forward, till, his face almost touching Tom's, his clinched fists pressed convulsively

against his thighs, — "blockhead, dare you fasten me out of my own room?"

The unexpected violence of Mr. Thornton's manner rather surprised than irritated Tom, and he looked at his father with a composed and slightly contemptuous cast of expression, without making any reply.

Mr. Thornton was sensible how groundless his charge was, the instant he uttered it. He was for a moment discomposed, too, by his son's calm and haughty bearing; and probably would have been glad had Tom replied in the manner he sometimes did.

"Do you stand there to insult me, Sir? You may well hold your peace, for what could you say to your infamous and rebellious conduct?"

"Do you mean fastening your door, Sir?" asked Tom.

"Door, door, puppy! Look you, its hinges shall rust off ere you shall open it again, unless you mend your life."

"Say but the word, Sir, and *you* need not be at the trouble of fastening."

"You 're a cold-blooded, thankless wretch," stormed out his father. "You were born to be a curse to me, instead of a blessing, and you joy in it. You lead a life of violence and riot, and will live and die a disgrace to your family."

"I will do something to give it a name," said Tom, "if I hang for it. I 'll not lead a milksop life of it, to be called respectable by old women, young sycophants, and money-lenders."

"A name, indeed! You 'll go marked like Cain, and with your hand against every man, and every man's hand against you; and hang you will, that 's past doubt, unless you mend."

"Better that, than without a name. And be a halter my destiny," said he, looking down upon his manly figure with some complacency; "I shall become a cart as well as another man."

"Fop!" snapped out his father, enraged at Tom's contemptuous, cool trifling.

"I'm no fop. If I'm a well-made fellow, I thank God for it; and where 's the harm of that?"

"Do you repeat my words, Sir, and trifle with your Maker, in my presence, and set all laws, divine and human, at defiance? Is 't not enough to break and destroy what 's mine, and keep all at home in an uproar, but you must go abroad, too, to disgrace me, and make yourself the hate and dread of everybody by your violence and rebellion? But you shall be humbled, and that in the eyes of all the world. We 'll have that proud spirit of yours down, before it rides over any more necks. Yes, my lad, it is settled. The whole school, with you at their head, (for you shall be their leader in this, as you have been in everything else,) shall to-morrow morning down on their knees before the master, and ask his pardon."

"I! on my knees to that shadow of a man! No, in faith, I 'd stand as straight and stiff before him as a drill-sergeant, till my legs failed, ere I 'd nod my head to him. What! he that would whip all faith and honour out of a boy, till he left a soul in him no bigger than his own! I 'll bow to none but to Him that made me, so help ——"

"Hold, hold," said the father (whose passions were now at their utmost); "have a care before you take an oath on 't; for, as I live, you 're no longer son of mine unless you do it."

"Then I 'm my own master, and the ground I stand

on is my own; for, by my right hand, I'll ask forgiveness of no man living," said Tom, turning resolutely away from his father, as if all was ended.

"Mad boy!" called out his father, "hear me now for the last time; for unless you this instant promise to obey, I'll never set eyes on you again;—and leave this house you shall by to-morrow's light."

"'T is a bright night," said Tom, looking composedly out of the window, "and the stars will serve as well. Nor will I eat or sleep where I am not welcome," he added, taking up his hat and walking deliberately out of the room.

His determined manner at once satisfied Mr. Thornton that Tom would act up to what he had said; and a father's feelings for the moment took possession of him, with compunction for the violence which had driven his son from him. He went toward the door to call Tom back, but he was already out of hearing. "Wilful and headstrong boy," said the old man, turning back and shutting the door, with a feeling of disappointment, "time and suffering alone must cure you." Thus for the moment he eased his conscience, and was saved the sacrifice of his pride.

Tom was passing through the hall with a hasty step, and had nearly reached the outer door, when the light caught his eye, as it shone from under the door of the parlour. The sight recalled him to himself, and stirred every home feeling within him. He heard his mother's voice as she was reading aloud. The blood throbbed to his throat. The thought that she should be so tranquil, and so unconscious of the affliction that was ready to break upon her, cut him to the heart. If she had been a victim which he was about to sacrifice, he could not have felt more pain. He listened a moment.

"I must not go without seeing her, without taking her blessing with me, — else I shall go accursed!" He laid his hand upon the latch and raised it a little: his mother still read on.

With all his violence and rudeness, Tom had a strong affection for his mother. His feelings, too, were now softened; for he was humbled and pained at reflecting upon the unjust violence of a father, who, though of a stern and hasty temper, he had heretofore respected. To a mind not wholly selfish, the faults of a parent are almost as mortifying and wounding as its own; and Tom would have given the world, if the wrong had now been in himself alone. "I dare not trust myself to see my mother now. She would make a very child of me; my father would be sued, too, and then what would become of all my resolutions and decision? — Pshaw!" said he, dashing away a tear with one hand, as the other dropped from the latch; "is this the way for one like me to begin the world?"

He walked slowly out of the house, drew the door to gently after him, and passed down the yard, unconscious that he was moving forward, till he reached the gate. He opened it mechanically, then, leaning over it, looked toward his home. "'T is an ill parting with you this," said he; "yet I leave you not in anger. Many a blessing I have had, and many a happy time of it, and many more there might have been for me, had I not been a froward child. There are few such to come, I fear." He stood with his eyes fixed on the house, while his mind wandered over the past, and what awaited him. The light flashed out cheerfully upon the trees near the window, and their leaves twinkled brightly in it. He cast his eyes round. The earth looked gloomy in the darkness, for no lights were

to be seen but those of the distant stars. "I said that ye would serve me," said he, looking upward, "and if I spoke in anger, Heaven forgive me for it. I must be on my way, and must go like a man."

In the midst of the most violent passions, it is curious to see how quickly and with what care the mind will sometimes lay its plans for future resources. Tom Thornton, when much younger than at this time, had been made a pet, that he might be used as an instrument, by a lad older than himself, of the name of Isaac Beckford. Isaac plotted most of the mischief done at school, and applauded Tom for his sagacity and intrepidity in the execution of it, taking care not to demand any praise for his own ingenious contrivances. In this way they became necessary to each other; and after Isaac left school to reside in the city with an uncle of the same name, whose ward he was, he wrote frequently to Tom, urging him to come to town, and share with him in the amusements in which a large fortune would soon enable him to indulge. Tom now resolved to make his way to the city, and have the benefit of his friend's influence to put himself in a situation to rise in the world.

Having made up his mind, though it was somewhat of a journey on foot to the city, and he ignorant of the way, (the village in which he resided lying far off from any great road,) Tom marched forward as confidently as if the church spires of the town had been in sight. The character of adventure, freedom, and novelty in his condition, the sharp, clear night-air, and the crowd and glitter of the stars in the sky, gave an expanse and a vivid action to his mind, and roused up the hopeful spirit which, for a time, had slept within him. "Come, come," said he to himself, "you're a tall boy, Tom,

better fitted to shoulder your way through the world than delve Greek under a starveling pedant."

So intent was he upon his schemes, that he took little heed to the by-road he was travelling, and had walked till about midnight without being conscious of time or fatigue. The stillness about him at last drew his attention, and, looking round, he found himself on the top of a small hill, in the midst of a country, barren, broken into knolls, and covered, as far as the eye could reach, with large, loose stones. An old tree, at a distance, was all that showed life had been there; and that, with its sharp, scraggy, and barkless gray branches shooting out uncouthly towards the sky, looked like a thing accursed. "A hard and lonely life you must have had of it here," said Tom, "and been sadly off for music, if you were at all particular about it; for I doubt whether any sound has been heard for a long time in your branches, but that of the ravens and the heavy winds. It is as deadly still all around here as the sky; I wish I could say it looked as well. What a pity that gibbets are out of fashion, for this would be a choice place for one; and could I but hear the creaking of it, I should not have my ears so palsied with this dreadful silence. — There winds a yellow cart-track from hill to hill, as far as I can see. It is to the left, and omens ill. I 'll take this, to the right, — whether to the world's end or not, time will tell."

And forward he went. He at last grew weary; and, as his pace slackened, he began to think of his home, his father and mother, and his many offences. His conscience was touched, and he felt as if undeserving the light of the quiet heavens that shone on him. "Can one prosper as he goes, when his father's anger and mother's grief follow him?" His heart began to

fail, and a thought passed him of finding his way back again. "What, and have my father taunt me, and call me a lad of mettle? And how like a whipped dog I should look, crawling up the yard! And then that forked master, and his pardon!" cried Tom, clinching his fists till the nails nearly brought blood, and muttering a curse between his teeth, as the tears started to his eyes, part in grief and part in rage. "Would that I had you in my grapple once more, you soulless wretch, and you should never make mischief between men again, — you mere thing! What, return to all that! No, in faith, I 'd sooner be thrown out here like a dead dog, and lie till the bones in this body were as bare and white as these stones, ere I 'd go back so."

He travelled on, with a loose, irregular step. Sustaining and hopeful feelings had left him, and melancholy and self-accusing thoughts were passing in his soul; yet his mind was made up, and supported by a dogged obstinacy. "There will be no end to this track, as I see. It winds round and over these hundred hills, as if it were delighted at getting into so pleasant a country." He continued his route. "Must my voice lose itself for ever in the solitude of this stillness? Is there a doom of eternal silence on all things, where I go? Will nothing speak to me?"

He presently heard a rumbling sound, as if in the earth under his feet. He started, but recovering himself, walked on. It increased to something like a low growl, and seemed to spread underneath the hills and through the hollows; and the earth jarred. "Does Nature make experiments with her earthquakes in this out-of-the-way place, before she overturns cities with them?" said he, with a bitter scoff, feeling how little he cared at the moment for what might happen. As

he came round a hill, the sound opened distinctly upon him, sending up its roar into the air; and raising his eyes, he saw at a distance a tall, giant pile, looking black against the sky. "So it turns out to be nothing but a waterfall! And why cannot I be fooled again, and take that clumsy factory for the huge castle of some big, hairy manslayer and violator of damsels? What! shall I be downhearted now in my need, — I, who have carried a confident brow and a firm breast against whatever opposed me! It must be that I need food, else how could I be so melancholy? I'll have that, and sleep too, before long, and a fresh body and bright day to start with to-morrow."

So saying, he took his way toward the building. The path led him to the stream, just above the fall. It lay still and glassy to the very edge of the precipice, down which it flung itself, roaring and foaming. The trees and bushes hung lightly over it, and the stars looked as thick in its depths as in the sky above him. He was about resting himself upon a stone; but, turning, he saw it was a gravestone. "It is a holy thing," said he, "and I will rest myself elsewhere." He looked round, — there was not another grave in sight. "What! all alone? No companions in death? Though we hold not communion with each other in the grave, yet there is something awful in the thought of being laid in the ground away from the dwellings of all the living, and not even the dead by our side. But thou hast chosen thy habitation well; for this stream shall sing a sweeter and longer dirge by thee, than ever went up from man; yet this shall one day be still, and its waters be dried up; but the spirit that was in thee shall live with God."

He passed along the race-way. The water had left

it; and the grass was growing here and there, in little clumps, in its gravelly bottom. Its planks and timbers, forced up, forked out like a wreck; and the huge wheel, which had parted from its axle, lay broken and aslant the chasm. He looked toward the building. The moon, which was just rising behind it, and shining through its windows, made it appear like some monster with his hundred eyes. Its door-path was overgrown, and nothing was heard but the wind blowing through its empty length, and here and there the flapping of a window. He went round it, and saw, at a little distance, four or five long, low buildings standing without order upon hillocks, without fence, or tree, or anything near them but the withered grass. "One would have thought," said Tom, "that nature had done enough without art's coming in to help the desolation. Not a light hereabouts! This seems not much like either bed or supper." Going forward, he looked in at one house, then at another; but nothing was to be seen except bare plastered walls. At length he spied a light gleaming through a crevice of one of the houses. The sight warmed his heart. He went to the door and knocked.

"Who 's there?" asked one, in a female voice.

"A friend."

"More foes than friends abroad at this hour, belike," replied the person within.

"I 've lost my way," said Tom. "No harm shall come to you, good woman, by letting in a traveller."

"You promise well, and in an honest voice," said she, as she opened the door.

The light shone upon her, and Tom saw before him a tall, masculine woman, with strong features, but with a serious and subdued cast of countenance.

"Who are you, young man? Out on no good intent, I fear, at this time o' night."

"I 'm Thornton of Thorntonville," said Tom, with his usual readiness; "an you 've ever heard of the place. I was going to the city afoot for once, and have missed my way."

"Thornton of Thorntonville?" said the old woman, seeming to recollect herself; "I have seen your father, then, down at the big house yonder. Come in."

"Your fire is comforting," said Tom, sitting down by it; "and it is the first comfortable thing I have met with for some long hours past. But you have made an odd choice of situations, my good woman."

"The poor have not often their choice. And there are things sometimes which make the bare heath dearer to us than garden or park."

"They are sad things, then," said Tom.

"Sad indeed," said the old woman, looking into the fire. She sat silent a little time; then, breathing forth a low sigh that seemed to relieve the bosom of its aching, she said to Tom, "You must be over-weary, and hungry too, if you are from Thorntonville to-day, for it is a long way; and you must have come over the heath; and one may stand there as at sea, — hill after hill, like so many waves, till they run into the very sky; and not a living thing on one of them all! Wide as it is, it would hardly find summer feed for my old Jenny, were it not for the circles of grass round the gray stones here and there."

"There is not much to be said for its looks," replied Tom. "I am not a little tired, too; and though I cannot well tell how far I have walked, there was hardly a streaked cloud in the west when I left home."

"It must have been a light heart and quick foot that

brought you so long a way in so short a time," said she, as she was getting ready a bowl of bread and milk. "The young hurry on, as if life would ne'er run out; yet many fall by the way; and I have lived to lay those in the ground, whom I looked to have had one day put the sod over this gray head."

Tom's thoughts had gone home, but the old woman's last words were sounding in his ears. And who will do that last office for me, or for them? thought he. She saw the gloom over Tom's face; and believing she had caused it, — "Never mind," she said, "the complainings of one whose troubles are nigh over. Here!" giving Tom the bowl. "You have but one dish to supper, yet that good of its kind; for 't is short feed that makes the richest milk."

"Whose is that huge building to the left, that creaks like a tavern sign?" asked Tom.

"It was his who would have made money out of moonshine. But he has gone before his works."

"He was not buried yonder, to be mocked by them, I trust."

"O, no," answered the old woman. "She that I laid there had no schemes of grandeur; for Sally Wentworth was of a meek and simple heart."

"Forgive me, my good woman, I should not have spoken of this, had I known how near to your heart it was to you."

"You have no forgiveness to ask of me. I am a lone woman, and there seldom pass here any who care to be troubled with my griefs; and it is moisture to this dried heart to talk to one who can feel for my sorrows; for Sally was not only my child, but God has seldom blessed a mother with such a child. When He took from me my husband, I hope I did not forget

His goodness in what He left to me; yet He saw fit to call her too, and His will be done. If grief had not killed her, I could bear my lot better. But how could it be other than it was, seeing that he whom she loved was so cruelly taken from her?"

"She died of love, then?" said Tom. "It is a death seldom met with, and bespeaks a rare mind."

"I know it," replied the mother. "True love is a peculiar and a holy thing; yet those are said to love who can lay one in the ground, and look fondly on another. O, I have seen it, and it has made me shudder when I have thought of those in the grave. Yes, and many, too, would scoff at them that were true to the dead. Yet they would not, were it given them to know that the grief of such had that in it which was dearer and better than all *their* joy. My Sally knew it, and it has made her a spirit in heaven. I sit and think over all that happened, but there is not a soul on earth to whom I can tell it."

"If you could think me worthy of it, I would ask you to tell me the story."

"'T is a sad one, but will not hold you long, for Sally's life was a short and simple one.

"She was to have been married to an industrious and kind-hearted lad. They knew one another when quite children, and grew more and more into a love for each other as they grew in years. And if their attachment did not show the breaks and passions of those which happen later, it was, I think, deeper seated, and seemed to be a part of the existence of both of them. Could you have seen them, as I have, sitting on that very form where you now sit, so gentle and happy in each other, you would not wonder that it wrings my heart, now they are both gone. But there

was a snake crawling and shining in the grass. His eye fell before the pure eye of Sally, yet he could not give over. I dare not speak his name, lest I should curse him; and Sally forgave him, and prayed for his soul on her death-bed. The Evil-One was busy at his heart; and, thwarted and enraged, and with his passions wrought up, he attempted that by force which he did not dare speak out to her. Though she was of a gentle make, there was no want of spirit in her; and the wretch liked to have fallen by her hand. 'Thank God,' she has said to me, 'that I did not take his life!'

"She came home, shaking and pale with what had happened, and frightened at the danger she had escaped. Frank met her at the door, and asked her eagerly what was the matter. She hinted, hastily, enough for him to guess the rest. He sprang from the door with an oath, — the first I ever heard him utter. She called loudly after him, but he was out of sight in an instant. She looked the way he had gone, almost breathless. 'I spared him,' said she, at last, 'but he may not, — he may not.' It was but a little while before Frank came home. He staggered into the house, and fell back into a chair. 'What have you done? Speak, tell me what you have done!' cried Sally. 'You have not, — you have not murdered?' Frank grasped his throat, to stop its beating. 'No, no,' said he, scarcely to be heard. 'I struck him but once, and he lay like a dead man before me, and I thought it was all over with him; but he presently opened his eyes upon me, and I dared not stay, for I felt the spirit of a murderer at my heart!' He looked at the moment," said the old woman, "as if dropping the very knife from his hand.

"And here," said she, "the storm began to gather fast and hard. The coward villain found means to raise suspicions against Frank, which threw him out of his employments. Yet so secret was he, as not to be suspected of the deed. The poor fellow wandered over these bare hills day after day, without knowing what to turn his hands to. In the midst of all this trouble, the wretch came to him, and begged forgiveness for his conduct to Sally. 'I can forgive you,' said Frank, 'but I do not like looking upon you.' 'That is not forgiveness,' said he, in a beseeching tone. 'I was a villain, for I would have done you an injury past remedy. And it was more than I deserved, that you should have spared my life when I was down. I have not had a quiet rest since that time, and never shall, if you do not suffer me to do something to make amends.' 'The best amends,' said Frank, 'will be a better life in you.' 'I know it,' he answered, 'and I hope it will be so, if remorse can give it. But you, too, must give me ease. Though young, my allowance is large. Some evil mind has worked you mischief, I am told, and you are poor. I do not ask you to take my money as your own, — I have no right to. But do at least show me that you have so far forgiven me as to suffer me to lend it to you, and see you well established in your trade. It is the only atonement left me; and you will not cut me off from that?' Frank refused, and the villain begged like a slave. Frank began to think it was sinful pride; and he thought of Sally, and then he consented. The money was lent, and as soon as Frank had laid it out in stock for trade, the note was put in suit, and he was stripped of all he had, and thrown into jail. He found a friend who released him; and he went

to sea. And think," said she, turning to Tom, "he that contrived it all was little older than you are now; and yet he wears a gay heart and fair outside.

"I need not tell of the parting. It was a bitter one, and no meeting after. There was a storm at sea, and the ship went down. And many a night have I lain and seen the body heaved up, wave after wave, as they took it, one after another, till they bore it away, far, far, out of sight. The news came at last; yet she shed no tear, nor spoke a word; but her silence was dreadful, — it was like a spirit near me. For many days she sat in that corner, with her hands clasping her knees, looking with a glazed eye upon the fire; and I could see her pining away before me as she sat there. At last she would leave the house at nightfall, when it was chilly autumn, and when the crisped, frozen grass would crumble under her feet. And I have found her standing on the top of a hill near, many and many a night, with her eyes fixed on the moon, her lips moving and giving a low sound, — of what, I could not tell. Nor would she look at me, nor mind that I was by. And I have led her home, and laid her shivering in her bed, and she would take no heed of me. At last the cold winds and the snow struck her. But as she lay there on the bed, her mind opened: it did not wander any more. She said that but one being had done her wrong, and though it was an awful wrong, she was sure that she forgave him, and would pray that he might be forgiven.

"Just before she died, she stretched out her hand to me, — she saw me look at it. 'It was a fresh hand once, but it is dead and shrunken now; and there are the blue veins,' said she, tracing them with one of her fingers, 'where the blood used to flow warm and quick;

but they are dried up, though they stand out so. I am going to peace, mother, and to him that loved me.' The tears fell on her pillow, as she said, 'But when I am gone, who will take care of you in your old age?' Then, looking upward, with a bright smile over her face, and without turning toward me, — 'God, my mother, God will take care of you.' I felt it like a revelation from heaven!

"She died, and I laid her where she wished to be laid, in that grave you saw by the stream. You spoke of one, did you not? I bring water from that brook, morning and night; and when the weather is calm I stop and pray at her grave, and in the driving storm I utter my prayer in the spirit as I pass by, — and with God it is the same, if it come from a sincere heart. — My story is done. — It is late, and you have walked far; and there is a clean bed for you, though a hard one, in the next room." Tom wished her good night; but she did not answer him; he saw that she could not. "O, Isaac Beckford," murmured she, as Tom shut the door, "there is a heavy sin on your soul. May there be mercy in heaven for you!" Tom did not hear the name, or suspect his friend.

Though he rose early, he found breakfast ready. The hostess looked cheerful; for every affliction has its comfort to the Christian. "And now," said he, shoving back his chair from the table, "how am I to find my way to the city?"

"Look," said the old woman, going to the door; "yonder you see the wood which borders this heath; and there are the chimneys of Beckford mansion, and the great road winds near it. You will see no smoke there, though a clear morning. It is an empty house now. The heath brought you a short route, for it is

only a dozen miles or so to town. Nigh enough, I fear, to such a place, for one with passions like yours."

"What know you of my passions, good woman? What have you heard of me?"

"Naught in the world. But do I not see them in the moving of your lip, and the gleam of that eye? Rein them with a steady hand, or they may prove of too hot mettle for you." Tom thanked her, and then offered her money. "You came as a cast-away," said she, "and I cannot take it." He tendered it again. "No, no, I can never take fare-money of one who has listened to my story." Tom urged her no further, but wishing her, kindly, good morning, set out on his way.

As he drew near the city, the roads became crowded, and his spirits rose. "What a mighty stir is here,—and what a medley! Things of all sorts, from horse-cart and check-frock to coach and laces! And who is merriest of the crowd it would be hard to tell.' At last came the hubbub and rattle of the town. "One needs a speaking-trumpet, to be heard here," thought Tom.

By dint of inquiry, a quick eye, and ready mind, he soon found the street, and the number of the house of Beckford's guardian. The servant made Tom's arrival known to Isaac. "What, my young *protégé!*" exclaimed Isaac to himself. "And in good time; for soon I shall be a free man, and he must minister to my pleasure, as must every one whom I favour. I must see that he is brought up in the way he should go."

With a deliberate step and plotting mind, he walked down stairs; but, rushing swiftly into the room and running to Tom, seized him round the shoulders, with a hearty God bless you, and How are you, my buck. This welcome was a cordial to Tom's heart; for, with

all his high spirits, the manner of his leaving home, and what he had passed through since, had depressed him and made him thoughtful; and he was ill at ease with himself. After many questions about old playmates, and jokes upon past school tricks, Tom told Isaac that he wished to see him where they should not be interrupted.

"To be sure you shall," said Isaac, stepping into a side room, and locking the door after them. "But what is all this for? You have no game afoot here already, surely? Or has some hare escaped you? If so, 't is I must start her again. I 've the scent of a hound, Tom."

"A good quality. Not wanted now, however. I will tell you what it is." And he told his story.

"A pretty child you, to quarrel with your bread and butter. A lad of mettle, truly. But does one show his spirit for the sake of getting a broken head? You must put yourself under my care. I see no reason why we should not live pleasantly enough without the old folks, till your father repents; which, I warrant you, will be shortly. In the mean time," said Isaac, scanning Tom as he spoke, "there must be a change from top to toe."

"I have no money," said Tom.

"I have, though," said Isaac; "so give yourself no concern." Tom coloured. He had not thought of this before. Isaac burst into a loud laugh.

"Give me leave," said he, as soon as he could speak. "Why, you look as you did when caught by your master stealing his rod. There is no other way for you; if you won't suffer me a trifling favour, you must bilk the tailor."

"I tell you what," said Tom; "I would be under

such obligations to no man living but you. And I like not that even. Money favours are but poor bonds of friendship."

"Pshaw!" said Isaac; "your father will pay all; and should he be stiff about it, if I credit him, and lose, what's that to you? So, now for a merry year to come."

"Not so fast," said Tom; "I want your assistance, but in another way. You have influential friends. I did not come here for sport. I am for sea and sea-fights." Isaac gave him a questioning look. "'T is even so; I am set upon it, Isaac."

"Well, then, so be it. But first, come, see my guardian."

Isaac was right in his conjecture about Mr. Thornton. His wife's anxiety concerning the fate of her son, and the reflection that he had been hasty and unjust towards him, led the old gentleman to write to Isaac's uncle; for he had little doubt whither Tom had gone. Mr. Beckford stated, in his answer, Tom's desire to go into the navy; and it was concluded that Tom should have a moderate supply of money, and be furthered in his intent, without knowing anything of his father's share in the business. Isaac therefore appeared as principal, and he took care to increase his influence by it; but he could not turn Tom from his purpose, and he did not like to thwart his rich uncle.

Thornton's mind was so full of ships and the seas, of fights and promotion, that Isaac saw it was impossible to sink him in dissipation at once. "Whatever is that lad's object," said Beckford, "is a passion with him for the time. I must give him line."

"Are you going to run me through, Tom?"

"I was only boarding the enemy."

"That coat is of the true cut, Tom."

"It sets no more to the shape of a man than to a partridge. When I am admiral, Isaac, — as I shall be ——"

"God save you, admiral!"

"I'll do ——"

"What will you do?"

"Pay you the tailor's bill, for having made me such a thing to show clothes on. Let 's to the ship. She sits on the water," said Tom, as they were carried towards her, "as if she were born of the sea. And then again, so tall, and light, and graceful, she seems a creature of the air."

A few days before sailing, he received a guarded letter from his mother. He threw it angrily upon the table. "No, no! This was written under the hard eye of my father." And he wrote an answer full of affection and high hopes.

As Tom had early resolved to command a ship of war, he had made good use of his time at school to learn all but what practice gives. With a quick insight into whatever he turned his attention to, his many and appropriate inquiries, and close and wide observation, he soon made himself familiar with all that could be acquired in port, and ready for much that the sea would teach him.

There was a stiff breeze and a clear blue sky, and the air was radiant with the sun, when he bade farewell to Isaac. Tom's brave, fiery, open temper made young Beckford's sly, cautious, and vicious disposition seem despicable and weak even to himself, and he was fixed upon revenge. He was one of that class who carry a hell within them, — who, belonging to the

rank of ordinary beings, and wanting the bold and sustaining spirit of open hostility, bear secret hate to all above them.

"This is life," said Tom, as he stood looking out on the ocean. "The unseen winds make music overhead; the very ship rejoices in the element in which she moves; and the sea on which we are opening, looking limitless as eternity, heaves as if there were life in it."

Tom had high notions of a ship's discipline, and submitted with a good grace. "And so will I be obeyed," thought he, "when my turn comes." Though among his fellow-officers his manner was too impetuous, yet there was something so hearty and frank in it, that they could not take offence. He exacted perfect obedience where he commanded, but was free from cruelty. He was continually learning of experienced officers; nor did he suffer the slightest thing, which could be of use, to escape his observation. He visited foreign ports; and with a curiosity all alive and perpetually gratified, this earth was like a new world to him.

At last came the news of a war, and Tom rubbed his hands like an epicure over a smoking dinner. "A bloody battle, and I shall mount, — or fall, and another walk over me: all the same to the world." At length was given the cry of "A sail"; and Tom saw a ship ahead rising up, as it were, slowly and steadily out of the sea, as she neared. As she tacked to the wind, he gazed upon her almost with rapture. "Queen of the sea," cried he, "how silently, and beautifully, and stately, she bears herself!"

"A heavy ship," said an older officer.

"She 's a superb bird of passage," answered Tom, "fit messenger for the gods. 'T is a pity; but we

must bring her down." A distant fire was opened. He looked disappointed and impatient that so little was done.

"You will be gratified to your heart's content presently, young man. We shall have no boy's play today."

"Nor do I want it. Let it come hot and heavy." And his eye brightened and his spirits rose, the harder and closer the fight.

In the midst of this, the enemy's mainmast swayed once or twice, then came a crash and a cry, and it went by the board. Tom shuddered, and shut his eyes convulsively, as he saw the poor fellows go with it. All was in a moment forgotten, when, the ship he was in falling on the other's bow, the cry to board was heard. He jumped upon the enemy's deck with the spring of a tiger. They gave way. He was foremost through the fight, with a wet brow and clotted hand. In a few minutes the deck was cleared of all but the dead and dying. All was bustle and joy on one side; and Tom's heart swelled, when the captain in his warmth shook him heartily by the hand. But no one envied him, so meekly did he bear it. He stepped back a little. A dying man gave his last groan at his feet. Tom started, and, looking down, saw the sightless, open eyes of the dead man turned up toward him. It shrunk his very heart up. "And has this been my sport?" said he. "God forgive me!" Tom went home, as one of the officers of the prize, with a high commendation of his conduct.

"I am worn with this incessant heave of the sea," said he, as he hung over the ship's side, "and long to be ashore, and smell the earth again, and mix in the occupations of men. The moon shines as fair here,

and looks as happy, showing her dimpled face in the water, as if she had all the world to worship her. The sky and earth hold blessed and silent communion, which we, who crawl about here, think not of. Would I could share in it, and mingle with the air, and be all a sensation too deep for sound, — a traveller among the stars, and filled with light! I am a thing of clay, a creature of sin," he murmured, as he turned and went to the cabin.

The rim of the sea was of gold, when the sun wheeled slowly up, and burnished the ocean. The light flashed up into the cabin windows. Thornton's soul enlarged itself as he looked out upon this life of the world. Going upon deck, he found an old officer there, who had been watching the harbour light, till it went out like the morning star. The gay islands, that lay softly upon the sea, looked to Thornton like messengers sent to welcome him to land; and as he made the shore, even the dark rocks seemed sociable, as if they had come down to meet him. He landed with an exulting spirit, amidst the cheers of the populace and hearty congratulations of the few acquaintances he had formerly left behind. Isaac was not among them; and upon inquiry, Thornton learned that he was out of town at the house of old Mr. Beckford, his late guardian. As soon as Tom could leave the city, he drove out thither.

As he dashed along with a speed that made the fields and trees seem hurrying by him, he thought of the time when he trudged the same road afoot and an outcast, and not noticed of a passer-by. "I always felt that I should rise, and make men look up to me; and I will be higher yet ere long. Neither will it be a gallows elevation, as my father prophesied. What a

triumph I have gained over them! They shall not fail to hear of it, and that shortly. — What a selfish wretch am I! Whose hearts, in all the world, will be prouder and gladder than theirs at my success?" — He whirled up the winding way to the house, and sprang to the ground as light as if buoyed by the air. There was one who saw him from behind the window-curtain. "What a gallant fellow!" she cried. "He descended to the earth like one of the gods. What a form! Who can it be? It must be young Thornton. Yes, the whole face tallies with what I've heard of his daring and impetuous character. Heigh-ho, I wonder what's become of Mr. Henley. I hope he has not broken his poor neck, and rid himself of his million of complaints at once."

Tom followed the servant, and came so suddenly upon Isaac, that he was not prepared to make his usual demonstrations of joy. Tom felt it for an instant. But Isaac, seeing his errour, began repairing it, by asking question after question, hardly giving Tom time to answer one of them, and expressing all the while the warmest joy at his success.

"Well, Tom, half a dozen years have done much for you."

"Yes, and I mean that six to come shall do more."

"Well resolved, as usual, and surely, I have no doubt; for you have fire and skill to melt and cast to your liking. Come along, and take a look at my fair cousin, — cousin I call her, though a third remove. But have a care, my boy, for her worn-out rake of a husband knows what a woman is, and has a lynx's eye."

There is nothing better calculated to put a man in a woman's power, than bidding him be on his guard

against her; for he at once imagines that he may be an object of interest to her, and that there is something in her worth being a slave to.

When Thornton entered the room, the sun was down, but the deep clouds were on fire with his light, and threw their warm glow upon a rich crimson sofa, on which rested, clad in light drapery, the beautiful Mrs. Henley. She was leaning on her elbow, which sunk into a cushion, raising her a little, and giving a luxurious curvature to the body, and showing the limbs in all their fine proportions and fulness. Her wrist, a little bent, shone with a dazzling whiteness, while her fingers were half hid among the leaves of a costly book. Her fairy foot, in a white satin slipper, was playing in the deep flounce of the sofa; and as she rose with a pretended embarrassment, the exquisitely turned ancle glanced for an instant on Thornton's sight. Something shot through his breast with the acuteness of an electric shock; and it was with difficulty that he could give utterance to the usual compliments. His confusion was not unobserved by Isaac or the lady; and they were both determined to turn it to their several purposes, and from very different motives.

Mrs. Henley had lived in Isaac's neighbourhood long before her marriage; and her fine person and face, and the slow, wavy outline which deep passion gave to her movements, had excited in him, to an intense degree, all that he was capable of feeling for a woman. The loose and evil passions were strong in him; and as he was without true courage, he gratified them by ingenuity and trick. When such persons are understood, the men despise and the women loathe them. All his endeavours to ingratiate himself with his cousin only

made him the more disgusting to her; for when he was most intent upon pleasing her, his manner was a mixture of fawning and condescension, which moved her contempt and touched her pride. Sometimes she revenged herself by cold disdain; at others, by turning him to ridicule with her playful and ready wit. But Isaac could submit to be trodden on, so he could gain his object, or compass his revenge; and he swore Fanny should be Mrs. Beckford, or rue the day she married another. He had failed in his first purpose, and was now bent on vengeance. He saw the effect that Tom had produced on her, and that he was not untouched. Isaac's plan was formed; and, although he had determined to use Tom as a mere instrument for his own end, he hated him for that very preference which had been shown to him, though it made him more easily his tool.

Fanny, with all her hate of Isaac, would have been Mrs. Beckford, had no better establishment offered. She was selfish, of strong passions, regardless of principles, extravagant, and ambitious, with a mind somewhat tasteful, yet fond of the showy, of high spirit and quick intellect (which is everything in fashionable society), and with art to appear whatever she chose at the time. She was balancing in secret the *pros* and *cons* of a marriage with Isaac, when Mr. Henley, who had wasted one fortune early in life, now suddenly presented himself with a broken constitution and fretful disposition, but with a large estate, to which he had just succeeded; and she in due time became Mrs. Henley. She soon devoted herself to spending his fortune, leaving him to his doctor and nurse.

"Why, Tom," said Isaac, in a laughing way, but with a malignant purpose, "you were as careless and

easy in company of the ladies before you went to sea, as you were at your whist-club; but you look as awkward now as some Jonathan, who is working himself up to a tender of himself and kine to a country maiden. Does the salt water always have such an effect?"

"If it does," said Fanny, "there are more virtues in a sea-voyage than I had before heard of; and it might be a benefit to some whom I had long put down on the list of incurables."

"Why, coz, one so pretty as you should only shoot Cupid's arrows, and not wound us with those of wit."

"'T is pity it should have mischiefed you; I but shot it o'er the house.

"And wounded your brother."

"Something too much akin, that, Isaac."

"Then you are not for the Platonics?"

"Not with a handsome youth like you." Isaac bit his lip, and Tom laughed.

"Why, Isaac, did I ever before see you so foiled? You have grown dull since I left you. Have your wits sharpened, — have them sharpened, Isaac."

"So do, Isaac, and on your heart," she whispered; "it will serve."

"I will," he muttered to himself, "and to your cost, you shall find, you silly ones."

At that moment Mr. Henley entered, leaning on the arm of old Mr. Beckford, who, now far advanced in life, was of a cheerful, fresh, and benevolent aspect. Mr. Beckford shook Thornton by the hand, and welcomed him well ashore. The other was a tall, stooping, gaunt figure, with a sallow and thin face, dark, hanging eyebrows, and a glancing, cautious eye. With all this, he showed the remains of a handsome person,

and was what is commonly called a polished gentleman. He received Tom with a courtly distance.

"My dear," said his wife, affecting concern, "you don't know how uneasy I have been about you."

"Perhaps not," he replied, without seeming to regard her.

"I am really afraid you have caught your death this cool evening."

"O, you are too anxious about me," he answered; "I do not feel myself dying quite yet." Tom ground his teeth against each other, as he overheard these replies.

They met at breakfast. The rich evening dress was changed for a simple robe, and Fanny looked as fresh as if she had bathed in the dew of roses. When the uncle and the husband were out of the way, Isaac gave such a turn to the conversation as would lead to his object. Then he proposed a walk in the little wood near the house; and when they had entered it, suddenly remembering some particular business, left Tom and Mrs. Henley together. The light shawl caught in the branches, and what less could Tom do than adjust it carefully over the finest shoulders in the world, unless we except the Venus's, — but hers are not living shoulders. There was a brook to pass, and an unsightly tree lying rudely across the path, and last of all happened that fatal accident, — and the shoe-lacing was seen trailing the ground.

Before many days, Tom had lost all control over himself. He had but one feeling and one thought. Isaac saw that affairs were going too fast. "The husband will be upon the trail, and the sport be all up. We must have doublings and crossings," thought he.

The husband was not so quicksighted as Isaac feared.

He had always been jealous of his wife, and not without reason. Jealousy, however, like most passions, discriminates but poorly; and Mr. Henley had been as much alarmed and as impatient at little circumstances, a thousand times before, as he was at what was passing now.

The uncle, who was a looker-on, and knew well the wife's character and Tom's ardent temperament, joined with Isaac, though from opposite motives, in urging Tom to hasten his visit to his father, from whom he had received a kind letter calling him home. He had not lost his affection for his parents, but he was infatuated. Day after day was set for the visit, and it was as many times put off. "I will propose going with him, and to-morrow," said Isaac to himself. "I am not ready for the catastrophe. He must be more in my power. He must rake, he must game, he must want money." For the passion which Isaac saw in his cousin for young Thornton had worked up towards him the hate of a fiend.

After much urging, Tom was ready, and they started. It was in vain that Isaac endeavoured to draw him into conversation. At length his home appeared in sight. It gave Tom the first happy feeling he had been conscious of since leaving Beckford house. It was with sincere joy he saw his parents; and his mother's tears touched his heart. With all his affection, he grew restless in a day or two, and pleaded his duties as a reason for his return. The old gentleman had received from Mr. Beckford a letter hinting at Tom's dangerous situation. He took his son aside, and talked kindly and earnestly with him upon the subject. Tom at first denied that there was anything to fear. "Look carefully into your heart," said his father. Tom did, and

then swore that he would think no more of her. "Oaths will not do it, my son; the mind must be bent up to fly the temptation, or you run to your ruin." He promised to himself and to his father that he would; but the next day hastened to it with the speed of fire. — "I cannot show her indifference at meeting, but at least I will appear composed," thought he.

Upon reaching the house, Isaac went immediately to his chamber, and Thornton, upon entering the parlour, suddenly met Mrs. Henley alone. She sprang hastily towards him; then, shrinking back, and glowing with what Tom took for shame, let fall her beautifully fringed lids. He spoke in a tremulous voice. She uttered a broken word or two; then, lifting her eyes to his, showed them drinking deep of passion. He would that instant have folded her to him, but a step was heard in the room. He darted out of the house, muttering between his teeth something about his disappointment, and a curse on the fool who caused it.

He walked on, maddened with the tumult of passions within him. He was not sensible whither he was going, till he suddenly saw at his feet the grave of Sally Wentworth. He recoiled from it like a fallen angel from the presence of the holy, and his abominations rose up black before him. He felt like an outcast from heaven; as if the very dead condemned him, and shut him out as a creature unfit to lie down at rest with them.

"The dead, the dead, no passions are torturing them; but shall I ever shake off mine?" He was leaning upon the gravestone, — his eyes fixed on the grave, — shuddering at his own passions, and thinking on the quiet below him, when some one spoke. "Thomas

Thornton," said the voice, "it is well for us to be here." He turned, and met the solemn, but mild countenance of Sally's mother. She observed the dark expression of his face.

"That should not be the face of one who holds communion with the dead. What ails thee, man? Thou lookest like one condemned for his crimes, yet afraid to die. It is an awful thing so to live as to fear to die."

"It is not death I fear, good mother; it is life,— it is myself."

"And dare you fear to live, and yet not dread to die, Thornton? There is a double and a woful curse upon thee, then."

"Do not you curse me, and standing here, too, lest the dead sanction it."

"I curse thee? She that lies here cursed not him that brought misery upon her. Neither would I thee. It becomes not us to condemn one another. But I fear for you, Thornton, — I fear for you. And did I not, the morning you left me, warn you take heed to your passions? — I cannot talk with others here," she said, looking on the grave. She turned away, and he followed her.

"I have looked to see you, day after day," she continued, as they walked towards the house; "for I have taken more concern in you than I ever thought to again in fellow-mortal. It has been whispered me, how you left home the night you knocked at my door; and it did my heart good to hear, a few days ago, that you had gone to see your father and mother. Nor for that alone was I glad, but that it might break the web which I saw a subtle spider weaving round you." Thornton coloured. "You have not darkened this

door," said she, as they drew near the cottage. "My eye has been upon you, nevertheless, at the house yonder." They both turned toward it.

"'T is she!" cried out Thornton. "Where can she have been?"

"Here, no doubt, and for no good purpose, I fear. For little have I seen of her for months past; and now she has but just missed you," added the old woman, casting a look of rebuke upon Tom. His cheek flushed a burning red; but his eager and impatient eye was fixed, like a hound in leash, on the figure at a distance. He stood for a moment silent, and leaning forward. "How this heath opens wide round about her, that the world may see her move! I must be gone, good mother."

"Hold, hold!" said the old woman, laying her hand on his arm, and fastening her eye on his fiery countenance; "art mad?"

"Mad? Ay, mad as the winds. She 'll be beyond reach instantly. I must go."

"By the spirit of her whose grave you just stood by, stay!" His hands fell powerless, but his eye still rested on the object. She was ascending a rising ground; and, as she reached the top of it, and her form appeared against a burnished evening sky, her long purple mantle waving in the winds, "She touches not earth," he cried, "but moves amidst the very clouds in glory!"

"Monster!" cried the old woman; "can you look yonder, and worship any but God?" The voice went through him like a word from heaven.

"Mother, forgive me," said he, humbled and ashamed.

"Ask forgiveness of Him you have offended, and not of me." As she looked upon him, her heart yearned

towards him as a mother's for her child. He raised his eyes towards the west once more, but she whom he sought had gone down the hill, and was out of sight. His countenance fell.

"Would that she could pass so from your mind!"

"Would that I could be taught to wish it!" he murmured.

"Turn then," said she, pointing to the sky, "and learn to love the works that God has made, and still keeps innocent, — to love them because they are His messengers to us, the ministers of His power, the revealers of His love for us. Rejoice in them; feel the heart moved by them! O, I have stood, at an hour like this, and looked, till I have thought the light of heaven was opening upon me, and God was near me." — She turned once more toward Thornton. His countenance had become calm and elevated. — "My son, could you learn to fill yourself with such thoughts as are now within you, the allurements of the world would be a tasteless show to you. But the heart must love something, — it must be sin or goodness." There was a short pause. — At last continued the old woman, "She you hunt after is another's. She vowed herself his at the altar; and if it is a stain on her soul, would it for that be less a sin in you to wrong him?"

"I would wrong no man," said Thornton.

"What! can you say how far you will go, when you cannot stop now?"

"I will, I will, even now."

"Beware that you stumble not through too much confidence. Turn away from the temptation; for she who tempts you, I fear, is eager to draw you on. I would not speak it of her but for your good," said the old woman, the colour coming to her pale cheek;

"for she was my foster-child, and has slept in these arms, and I loved her next to my own. But ambition and vanity and all unchecked passions have been busy at her heart. It was for houses, and lands, and a high place in the world, that she bartered herself; and she who will do that by holy covenant may one day do it without bond. You are now going into the world again; but carry with you, if you would have mercy on your soul, what I have said; and as you keep it with you, so Heaven bless you."

He grasped her hand; and then turned and walked homeward. She looked after him till he was lost in the twilight, and, with a misgiving heart, shut her door.

Thornton went directly to his chamber. He was afraid of Isaac's ridicule, and dared not trust himself with a sight of Mrs. Henley. He was melancholy and humble; but there was a virtue in his state of mind which made him less impatient of himself than he had been for weeks past. He thought of the widow and her daughter, of death, and what is to come; and his passions subsided, and the storm of the mind seemed clearing and settling away, and he had the quiet sleep of a good man. But the light and stir of day, which scatter our resolves and fill us with the present, came on; and the gay and beautiful vision of Fanny broke upon him with the morning sun.

He sprang from bed; and in his eagerness to hasten down stairs, everything was out of place and fretting him with delay. None but the domestics were up. He walked out a few steps, returned, then went out again; and thus continued till the breakfast hour arrived. He met only Mr. Beckford and Isaac at table. His eye was constantly on the door. "Mr. Henley and

lady left us about dusk last night, for the city," said the old gentleman. Thornton's countenance changed. "I fear you will never be a gallant," said Isaac. "To think that you should not be here, to bid so fair a lady farewell! But you may make such amends as you can, for we all move town-ward to-morrow."

The next day they reached the city.—"Make yourself ready," said Isaac, "for we are to go to Henley's to-night, you know."

As they passed along the streets, the brilliantly lighted shops, the gay faces and talk within, and then the shadow of a building thrown, here and there, in straight line across the pavement, and some one moving silently through its obscurity, gave a sudden contrast, and a strange mixture of open gayety and mysterious stillness to the scene, which excited Thornton's mind, at the same time that he felt a cautiousness stealing over him. Then was heard the rumbling of a carriage. Presently it would shoot by them with a stunning rattling of the wheels, and a sharp clatter of the horses' hoofs, now and then striking fire, and all would die away again in the darkness and distance.

They at length reached the superb mansion of Mr. Henley. It was like entering into broad daylight. It shone like a fairy palace in the Arabian Nights. And there stood Mrs. Henley under a large chandelier, richly and splendidly dressed, her fair skin sparkling with an almost metallic brightness, and her eyes full of light and action. At the first glance she coloured; but, recovering herself with a practised readiness, gave Thornton a frank welcome, at the same time introducing him to the circle about her. Those who observed his confusion set it down to bashfulness, and as such passed it by. She was in full spirits, talked much and brilliantly;

and his fine figure and face, his honest vehemence and hearty good nature, drew round them the choice part of the company. Then came the dance, with all its winding and wavy motions; and her soft hand rested too long in his: the fingers of each trembled, and told what they should not. The flame was again lighted up within him, and it rose and swept along with the rush of a forest fire. He lingered as long as Isaac dared let him, and was at last half drawn away by him from the house. He passed the remainder of the night, at one time calling himself a madman and villain, and then, in his hot impatience, swearing that no earthly power should bar him his way. The thought of her now fully possessed him. She saw the power she had over him, and loved it too well to risk it by too easily yielding to his passion. He had no rest out of her presence, followed her wherever she went, and was at her house morning and evening.

"Tom," said Isaac, one day, "do you know that the world begin to talk about you and my sweet coz?"

"I care not for their talk. What have they to do with me or with her?"

"Much, my young blood, so long as you make a part of the world. And it is something to me, Tom, and touches me nearly. You know not your danger; but I must not let you bring disgrace upon any of our relations, however distant. Besides, the husband grows suspicious; and would you spill his blood, or throw so fine a girl out from fortune?

"God forbid!" said he, warmly. "Yet I know not, Isaac, — my power over myself is gone. Save me! if you can, save me!"

"And so I will, if you will be a man. We must change the scene; and you shall see some good fellows,

and be as merry as ever, I warrant you. Come along with me."

Tom followed as if his self-will was lost. He talked and laughed, and had his joke, and was called a man of spirit. He drank to excess, and grew restiff. The cool Isaac kept an eye upon him, without being observed, and took him off in time. "This will suffice for a beginning," said Isaac to himself. "We will minister a little more freely next time."

Thornton waked languid and remorseful; still, he found himself in a few hours at Henley's house. Isaac did not try to prevent it. He was only retarding the accomplishment of Tom's wishes, that he might ruin him altogether. Then came more riot and excess, and lastly gambling. And Tom played rashly and lost; for he was trying to fly from himself, and cared not for fortune. And Isaac lent him money now and then, and oftener found other friends to furnish him: All was ripening for Isaac's purposes.

In the midst of this, Tom received a letter from his father, written in the anguish of his mind, and calling upon his son, if he would not blast an old man's hopes, to leave the city and come to him. The letter spoke of Tom's mother, her distress, and the fondness with which, in the midst of it, she clung to her only child. Tom stamped upon the floor, with vexation and shame, cursing himself as the vilest wretch alive. "I will go to them," cried he, "I'll go, by to-morrow's light." The morning came, and then he thought of taking an eternal farewell, and the like. He lingered, and Mrs. Henley's carriage drove by. There was a familiar nod and a smile, and his resolutions were again gone with the wind. That night he played and lost, and grew angry. Then came a duel. He was wounded,

and called a man of honour. In a few days, however, he was able to visit at Henley's.

Nothing interests a fashionable woman half so much, as a genteel young fellow with his arm in a sling, particularly if he received his hurt in a duel. Mrs. Henley turned pale when she saw Thornton, spoke breathingly of his wound, and asked a thousand kind questions about it. — "The hand hangs a little too low, methinks; let me shorten the handkerchief." And standing by his side, her arms were partly round his neck, as she was trying to untie the knot. Their hearts beat quick. Thornton could control himself no longer, but pressed her madly to him. Her head sank upon his shoulder, while she murmured that he would be her ruin. There were vows of eternal love, and protestations of honour, and an assignation. The last, at least, was not kept; for Mr. Henley left town early the next day, compelling his wife to accompany him. He had heard and seen enough to raise his suspicions. He did not want courage to call Tom out, but relished little the thought of being pointed at as the unhappy man who had been engaged in an affair of honour with his wife's friend.

When Thornton called in the morning, the house was shut up. He rang, but no one came to the door. After walking some time before the house, he returned to inquire of Isaac whither they had gone. Isaac could only conjecture. Tom uttered the direst imprecations upon the jealous dolt's head. Isaac affected to be amused at Tom's wrath.

"Why, the wench has jilted you, my young sprig. You stood shill-I-shall-I too long." But he bit his lips, and swore inwardly; for his plotting had come to nothing.

"I'll hunt them the world through," cried Tom, "ere I'll be thus thwarted!"

He went to his chamber, and found on his table a letter, showing the greatest alarm in his mother for his father's life. "What! does death cross between me and her?" His blood curdled at the thought of what he had uttered. — "She has made me a child of hell!" he cried, in the agony of his passions. "Let me be gone, let me be gone!" He reached home in time to close his father's eyes and lay him in his grave. There was something more than grief in him for his father's death. It was the fear that he had hastened it. — "He was proud of me," thought Tom, "harebrained as I was. And I gave him hope, and in the midst of it let a woman who has forgotten me cut it off; and I have laid him in his grave, disappointed and sorrowful. He had a soul of honour; and I, his only son, did what I could to wound it."

The grief of his mother, and her imploring helplessness, took Thornton's mind off from its regrets and painful thoughts, while it softened his heart, and laid it open to those kind and gentle affections, against which it had for so long a time been shut. His manner to her was as mild, and soothing, and regardful, as if no headlong passions had ever stirred him: There was something almost parental in it. And when the time came that he should adjust his father's affairs, in order to go to sea again, he was delicate and generous towards his mother to an extreme.

When the hour arrived for him to leave her, she hung round him and wept bitterly. — "There is now no one in all the earth left for me to lean upon but you, Thomas; and my soul cleaves to you as all betwixt me and death. Remember your fond old mother, when

you are gone from her. You will think of me on the seas, but, forgive me, Tom, you may not in the city."

"Think not so hardly of me, my mother; my heart is not seared yet. Can I lose all thought of you anywhere, when, perhaps," he said, brushing a tear from his lash, "it is I who have made you so soon to be alone? No, I will remember you, not only in sorrow and in hours of solitude and thoughtfulness, but bear you with me in my daily life, and think how dear are a mother's pride and joy in a son."

And when he left her, he begged her blessing with as submissive and meek a feeling as ever entered man's soul. Intimate affections and beautiful thoughts were shooting up within him; but his passions would sweep over them like a strong wind, and leave them torn and dead in the dust.

He reached the city a few days before sailing. His composed, serious manner awed Isaac, and made him hate him more than ever. Thornton discharged his debts contracted with money-lenders, and found enough left out of his father's estate to pay Isaac. Isaac would have put off receiving it. — "I shall never forget your kindness," said Tom. "But I cannot see why you would keep a friend under such an obligation, and that, too, unnecessarily, and against his will." Isaac took the money without further parley, but with a resolution of perseverance in Tom's ruin, which, in a good cause, would have done honour to a saint.

Thornton passed Henley's house more than once, as he strolled out at night; and he would stand and look toward it till the bright figure of her he thought on grew luminous to his mind; and he would follow it till his eyeballs ached, as it passed off into the darkness. The passion had been laid for a time, but only to burst

out more violently than ever. Before, it took possession of him in the uproar of the mind, but now it had become mixed with his deepest sensations and most serious thoughts.

In a few days the ship bore him from shore. He was gone two years; but in all countries, through the hot and successful fight, in storm and calm, the sense of this woman clung to him like his very being. And when at last he once more spied the gay city rising, as it were, out of the water, he leaped like a child, for joy. "Neither man, nor land, nor sea, shall keep me from her now. Some devil may have possessed me, but I cannot, I will not, struggle any longer. She 's mine, come on 't what may." And he was given over to his passions with little to thwart them; for he found the elegant Mrs. Henley a gay and splendid widow.

Thornton had returned, it was true, without money, but then he had the finest face and figure in the world, and he was the talk of everybody. Besides, as fascinating as the widow was, few men liked her extravagant and high spirit.

Isaac put in for her favours, and was repulsed. He was silent, but the wound rankled. Old Mr. Beckford warned Thornton. Tom was offended, and avoided him; and Isaac helped on the match without appearing to do so. The old gentleman gave Mrs. Thornton notice; and she wrote to her son, imploring him to come to her, or, at least, not to plunge himself headlong into ruin. She called upon him in the name of his father and as he cared for her life. It was in vain: he would hear nothing, he would see nothing; he was married, and undone.

For a time, all was blaze and motion. No house was furnished like the dashing Mrs. Thornton's, no

parties half so splendid, and no dinners so costly and got up in such taste, as the Thorntons', and no one drove such a four-in-hand. And if high life may in truth be called life, no one knew better how to live than the Thorntons. But it becomes our disease, it breaks up our thoughts, and kills our hearts, and makes what should be individual and fresh in us common and stale. Politeness becomes feigning, and the play of the affections is lost in the practice of forms.

Thornton began soon to find it so; and to relieve its satiety, he pushed farther into excesses. A kind of feeling, too, rather than reflection, was growing up in him, that beauty, and high spirits, and a bright, ready intellect in a woman, would not stand in the stead of principle, and delicacy, and a fond heart. His pride also was hurt, that, instead of being looked up to with kind regard, he was treated rather as an important part in a splendid establishment; that his fine person was praised, and elegant manners admired, and even his very mind valued, just so far as they served for an ornament, and a help to notoriety.

He received frequent letters from his mother complaining of his seldom writing, and of his not coming to visit her in her deserted state. She spoke of her low spirits, her feeble health, and her concern for him; and melancholy reflections were made, of a general nature, but such as he well knew how to apply to himself. He saw that her love of him, and her disappointment and anxiety, were wearing her away; and the sad thought that he was hurrying her to the grave crossed him in his riot and excess.

His power over himself was gone; he had become more than ever the slave of his passions, and they bore him along with a never-resting swiftness. He

found the woman, for whom he had sacrificed all that was worthy in his character, selfish and regardless of his feelings. The disappointment made him hurry into dissipation with the craving appetite of a diseased man; and Isaac was always a friend at hand, to assist him. His wife was no less extravagant than he; and at last came borrowing and mortgages, and squandering seemed to increase as their fortune lessened. He ran into gaming to retrieve his circumstances, but with galled feelings and a fevered brain; and it made his condition the more desperate.

Isaac's spirits rose as he saw Thornton sinking. He assisted him as before in procuring loans, and lent him money besides. "The day is near," said Isaac to himself, "in which I shall live to see that lordly spirit brought down. And my other end shall be compassed, too, let it cost me ever so dear. Yes, my proud madam must be supported in her magnificence; but the scorned and loathed Isaac must be wooed then like the dearest of men. What care I, though she feign it like the commonest of her sex, while in the bitterness of her heart she secretly curses me in the midst of it? Does it not make fuller my revenge?"

And on he went, wilily and playfully, to his object. Though he had a spirit of avarice not to be glutted, yet he would throw out his wealth like water to sate his hate or lust. He caused information of Thornton's circumstances to be given to one of the creditors. He took care to be at the house when service was made. Thornton's wrath was beyond all bounds; he threatened the officer's life, swore it was his wife who had brought him to disgrace and ruin, and cursed his folly that he had ever married. She said something sneeringly about half-pay officers. Tom's eyes flashed fire, and Isaac became mediator.

"Upon my word, Thornton, my dear friend, you must command yourself, or this will get wind, and they will be on you like harpies. For heaven's sake, command yourself. My dear Sir, how great is the debt? — Upon my soul, no trifling sum. Let me see, — I have a deposit for a certain purpose. I must contrive to meet that in another way; my friend must not be ruined thus." He made himself answerable to the officer. "And here, Tom, you must give this as hush-money to the man. You have used him too roughly." All this was done in the presence of the wife.

Affairs had now nearly reached the worst; and Thornton's disappointments and troubles had almost made a madman of him. When heated with wine or loss at play, his rage made him dangerous, and he became the dread of his companions. Nothing but Isaac's plausible and smooth manner had any control over him; and with Isaac, Thornton was like a tiger with his keeper.

Old Mr. Beckford, with the best intentions, frequently wrote Tom's mother about him. It only served to hasten the wretched woman's decline, and drive him on the faster, that he might shake off the remorse which his mother's letters caused him.

Isaac never shut his eyes upon his object; and as Tom's utter ruin drew on, and the time had nearly come for Isaac's fulfilling his plans and accomplishing his last wish, it required all the hypocrisy of his nature not to break his purpose too soon to the wife. He knew that he had no strong virtue to struggle against, but something as stubborn, a woman's dislike. And he played his part well; he was humble, he was grieved for their situation, he spoke timidly of his long contest with himself to overcome his love for her, and the mis-

ery it caused him; and shrunk back when he saw scorn on her lip. Then he spoke of his fortune, and of his wish that he had been worthy to have saved such a woman from poverty and the neglect which a hard world might one day show her. And so he wound his way.

She hid not her contempt from him; she scrupled not to say that it was dread of poverty and of a fall from high life, that made her yield to the man she despised; that she had seen through his designs long ago. Still, he supplied her with money to support her extravagance; and she made him throw her husband's obligations into the fire, before her, with his own hands. She yielded, and the man obtained that for which he had hunted hard for years, and the devil had his triumph.

It lasted not long. Thornton's suspicions were awakened. He did not burst out in fury. Every passion within him settled down into a deathlike stillness. His mind seemed suddenly to take the shrewdness and ingenuity of the crazed in effecting their object. And he traced out, step by step, the windings of the subtle Isaac.

At last, he tracked him to the place of assignation. The entrance was barred. He broke it down with the strength of an enraged giant. Isaac fled through another passage as Thornton entered. Thornton heeded not his wife; his soul was bent up to a single purpose, and that a terrible one, and he saw no other object in the world. He followed with the speed of lightning; but passing swiftly by a narrow, dark side-passage, through which Isaac had escaped, missed his prey. He wound through the passages of the house with the eagerness of a bloodhound, — then through

the by-lanes of the city, till he reached Beckford's house. He asked the servants, in a composed manner, for Mr. Beckford. He had gone out some time before, and had not returned. Thornton saw that they were not deceiving him. He searched for him through the city, and returned at night to prepare for a journey, for he then concluded that Isaac must have left town. In a little while he was ready; but, changing his mind again, went out and passed the night in further search. In going to and from the house, he did not seem to be sensible of the absence of his wife, or so much as to recollect that he had one.

In the course of the morning, he learned that one of Beckford's best horses was missing. In an instant he was mounted, and was soon out of sight of the city. Yet he could only conjecture Isaac's route. He continued his pursuit till about nightfall, in silence, and with his mind full of undefined thoughts of vengeance.

He was riding along a dangerous, narrow track, near the edge of a precipice, at the foot of which was running a deep, swift stream, when, just as he was turning the corner of a rock, his horse's head suddenly crossed the neck of another horse, held by a man who was walking cautiously by his side. Though it was growing dark and the man was muffled, Thornton knew him the instant his eye fell upon him; and springing to the ground with a shout, he stood full before Isaac. The great coat fell from Isaac's ashy face. He could neither speak nor move.

"Have I you, then?" cried Thornton, grappling the trembling wretch by the throat, and lifting him straight off his feet. He gave a keen glance down the precipice, without speaking, and then looked doubtingly. "No, no, I'll not take the dog's life so. — Hold! there!

you curse of man!" said he, drawing out his pistols, and handing one to Isaac. Isaac put out his hand to take it, without seeming to be conscious of what was to be done. "Stand there," said Thornton, "and make sure your aim, for the last hour of one or both of us is come!" — Isaac's hand trembled so that his pistol fell to the ground. — "Have ready, man, or you 're gone!" screamed Thornton, frantic with rage. Isaac could not move. — "Down, then!" he cried; and the fire of the pistol flashed over Isaac's wild eyes, and convulsed, open jaws; his arms tossed upward in the agony of terrour and death, and he fell over into the stream. His horse, rearing with fright, plunged with his master.

Thornton looked over the precipice. Nothing was to be seen or heard but the whirl and rush of the dark tide. — "And can we go so quickly from life to death?" he muttered; "why, then, should a man live to misery?"

He turned slowly away. The longing for revenge was satisfied, and he was now left feeble as a child. He mounted his horse with difficulty, and rode homeward, his brain stunned with horrour. At last his mind grew slowly more distinct; and with the recollection of what had passed came frightful figures, which fell away, then suddenly rose again, and spread themselves close before him. He pressed his eyeballs till they darted fire, then passed his hand quickly before his face, as if to drive away what he saw; but the terrible sights returned upon him.

He delayed going into the city, till about dark the next day. As he entered it, the sudden change from the quiet of the country to the noise, the quick and various movements of the crowd, the broken lights and shadows, and flare of lamps, increased the confu-

sion of his mind, till it so wandered, that he scarcely knew where he was when he reached his door.

He leaned forward on his horse for some time, trying to regain his self-possession. At last, looking up at the house, and observing that it was quite still and dark, the thought of his wife crossed him. He leaped from his horse, and, rushing up the steps, rang violently at the door. It was opened cautiously by one he had never seen before; but such was the state of his mind that he paid no regard to the circumstance. Throwing open the door of the nearest room, he found it stripped of its furniture. He hurried from room to room; all was bare and deserted. The truth came fully upon him, — a desolate house, and he turned away, a beggar, from his own door.

He ran toward the street door, scarcely knowing whither he was going, when he was arrested by a couple of men, for debt. He made no resistance, but talking incoherently to himself, suffered them to carry him peaceably to prison. He lay down upon the bed that was furnished him, and soon fell asleep as quietly as if in his own house; for both body and mind had lost their sensibility, through violent effort and fatigue.

The sun had shot into his prison with a red and dusty ray before he awoke; and for a time he could not recollect where he was, or what had passed. Presently he muttered to himself, — "In prison, and for murder, and die on a gallows!" The turning of the key roused him a little. "My brain 's disordered." A man handed him a letter and left the room. He gazed on it for a while without noticing whose hand it was. "My God, my mother!" cried he, at last; "and am I to be your murderer too!"

Mrs. Thornton had heard from old Mr. Beckford of the attachment laid upon her son's property immediately after his leaving the city, and she had written in a state of mind that showed she could not much longer endure her sufferings. Mr. Beckford, at her earnest request, had gone to her. His nephew had left town unexpectedly; but the only suspicion was that he had fled with Mrs. Thornton, and that her husband had now returned after an unsuccessful search. Thornton's anguish was dreadful, — his mother dangerously ill, and made so by him, and yet he not allowed to see her! — "She will die, believing that I cared not for her; and yet I dare not let her know why I cannot see her."

In a day or two came another letter, and from Mr. Beckford; for the mother was too feeble to write. Thornton's impatience was now almost maddening. At times he raved like a maniac, then suddenly sank down into a state of torpor, till the remembrance of his father, his leaving home, the misery he had brought upon himself and his friends, again rushed upon him. Then would suddenly appear the face of Isaac, as he saw him die; and he would spring up and stand as if frozen with horrour.

This was not to endure long. Mr. Beckford wrote a letter to him, stating that his release was procured, and urging him to set off immediately by the conveyance furnished; for that his mother, unfortunately, had heard of his imprisonment, and that the shock had been a violent one to her, in her weak condition.

Thornton was standing in a state of apparent insensibility when the keeper entered. He did not notice that any one was in the room; but when his eye fell upon the letter, as it was handed to him, he seized it

as a caged lion would his food. He ran his fiery eyes over it, then shook it from his hand as if it had been a snake he held. "This is not her blood," muttered he, looking closely at one hand, then at the other, as if counting the spots. "No, no, this is Isaac's, — I know it well, — my old school-fellow, Isaac's blood." He stood a few minutes perfectly still, then pressed his hand to his forehead, as if trying to recollect himself. "Where have I been? — Ha! I remember now."

"My horse, my horse! — Is he ready?" he asked eagerly of the servant, who was entering the apartment.

"At the gate, Sir. But you are not ready."

"True, true!" And he suffered the man to equip him. He looked at himself for a moment, as if not knowing for what purpose he was so dressed. Then, as the thought struck him, he darted out of the prison, and running to the gate, threw himself upon the beast, and dashing the rowels into his sides, was out of sight in an instant.

There was now but one purpose in his mind, and he clung to it with a spasmodic grasp; and the speed with which he rode, and his intense eagerness, nearly fired his brain. His eye was fixed on home; he saw nothing round him; he minded not hill or hollow.

The horse's nostrils shut and dilated fast, and the sweat ran down his hoofs, when Thornton came in sight of the house. Once more he urged him on, and then reached the door. He tossed the reins on the neck of the panting beast, and throwing himself off, was in an instant at the head of the stairs. The chamber door was shut. As he flung it open, he rushed toward the foot of the bed. On it lay, with a white sheet over it, the corpse of his mother. His

hands spread, his eyes glared wide, and his hair stood on end. One shudder passed through his frame, as if it would have snapped every stretched fibre. Tearing with a grasp the hair from his head, he gave a shriek, enough to have awakened the dead, and ran, mad, from the chamber.

Old Mr. Beckford, hearing a noise overhead, stepped to the parlour door, and saw Thornton coming down stairs. He called out. Thornton answered not a word, but rushed by him, the hair in his clinched fingers. As he passed, he turned his eyes on the old man, — the sockets sent out nothing but flame. The old gentleman followed, trembling, to the door, and looked out, but he was gone. The noise came and went like a thunder-clap, and all was still again.

He pushed eagerly on, not regarding whither he was going; and the horse took the same course Thornton did the first time he left home.

At last he struck upon the heath, and rode onward till he came where the way forked. His recollection returned at once. He checked his horse suddenly, and looked over the track he had once passed. His lip quivered, and tears stood in his eyes. "Ages of misery have rolled over me since then," said he, looking forward upon the track till it was lost in the distance. "To the left, to the left!" cried he to his horse, pressing him on; "for that, I then said, was ill omen, and it suits me now."

After Mr. Beckford had laid the unhappy mother in her grave, and had sent in all directions to gain information concerning her son, he went to the city to make inquiries about his nephew.

The horse was washed up near the precipice, but Isaac's body was never found. It was supposed that

the animal had taken fright, and had fallen with his rider into the stream.

Mrs. Thornton was soon heard of as appearing the dashing mistress of a young man in a distant city. Her extravagance and violent temper caused frequent changes in this sort of connection, and she soon sank down into the lowest class of females of her order, and died as they die.

As no account of Thornton could be gained, it was conjectured that he had either destroyed himself, or had wandered away a maniac. It was autumn when he disappeared; the winter had set in stormy and cold, and some supposed he might have perished.

In the early part of the day, towards the close of spring, as the widow Wentworth was taking care of a brood of chickens just hatched, a man in a fisher's garb drove up to her door. He was seated in a light cart, old and shattered, and drawn by a small, lean horse. He inquired whether she could inform him where lived a woman of the name of Wentworth.

"It is for me you are looking, I suppose, good man. What is your will?"

"I would ask you to give me a morsel," said he, getting down from his cart, "before I tell my errand; for I have ridden ever since daybreak, and it has been but a chilly morning."

After finishing his meal, he began as follows:— "There was a strange young man made his appearance in our parts last autumn; and he has been thereabouts up to this time. It 's clear that he 's not altogether right here," said the man, touching his forehead; "but then he would harm nobody, and kept wandering about all alone; and so we never troubled him."

"Well, what of him?" said the old woman, eagerly; for she immediately conjectured who it might be.

"I fear he's dying," said the man. "He was not seen all along shore for many days, and some of us went to his hut; and there he was lying, looking like one of the dead. But he was sensible enough then, and begged that we would find a widow of the name of Wentworth, (who I thought from his account must live hereabouts,) and bring her to him before he died; 'for,' said he, 'she is the only one of all the living that has any love for me.'"

"And did he tell his name?"

"No," said the man. "We asked him; but he said it was no matter, and that you would remember him to whom you told your story, and talked so holily when the sun was going down. 'She 'll not have forgotten it,' he said, 'as I did, when I most needed it.'"

"And think you he 's dying?" asked she.—"It matters not," she said to herself.

"There must be life in him yet," replied the fisher.

"I saw the tear in his eye," she continued to herself. "when I told him of Sally; and I have talked with him by her grave; and I will lay him in the ground, too, when he dies.— Which way, and how far is it, to the place, good man?"

"A dozen miles, or so, due east, as I guess."

"How am I to get there and back?" asked she.

"With me," he answered; "for this is the only coach in all our neck of land, and this the only steed, ragged as he looks, except the poor young man's; and he 's in no better condition now."

The old woman, having found a friend to take charge of her house, began her journey.

"We were all out a fishing, except our old woman,"

said the man, as they rode along. "When we got back, she told us that a young man, a gentleman, and well dressed, had been to the hut two or three times for food, and that he always took it away with him. She would not receive his money, for he appeared not to be in his right mind. But he never failed leaving some on the table. Whether or not he knew of our return I can't say; but we saw nothing of him, till one day, passing an old hut which we had left for a better, we spied him sitting at the door, and his horse feeding on the coarse grass near it. As soon as he discovered us he went in, and he ever shunned us. We have seen him looking for shell-fish among the rocks, and carrying home wreck-wood for firing. How, with that little, he kept himself warm through the nights of winter, I cannot tell. And for aught we could find, dried sea-weed must have been his bedding. We have sometimes left food near his hut, and his horse used now and then to share the scant fare of this pony here; for I could not but pity him, though a beast, when the sleet drove sharp against him."

As they drew near the shore, a heavy sea-fog was setting in. In a few minutes the sun was hid, and the damp stood on the nag's long, shaggy coat, like raindrops. They soon heard the low growl of the sea; and turning a high point of land, they saw near them multitudes of breakers, foaming and roaring, and flinging themselves ashore like sea-monsters after their prey.

They were descending slowly through the heavy sands to the beach, when they heard two persons calling to each other in a sharp key. The voices sounded as at a distance; but in a moment they saw just ahead of them, and coming towards them out of the spray and mist, a man in a sailor's jacket, and a

woman in one of the same, with a man's hat fastened under her chin by a red handkerchief. A startling, mysterious feeling passed over the old woman, as if those she saw were something more than human, and were given another nature to be dwellers in the sea.

"Is there life in him?" cried her guide, as they passed. — "Scant alive," called out the woman. The old widow looked back. They had passed into the mist again, and were out of sight.

They had not ridden far along the beach, before the fog began to break away, and the sea and sand flashed upon them with a blinding brightness. They dragged on a mile or two farther, when the sky became gloomy, and the wind began to rise.

"And is all as desolate as this?" asked the old woman, looking over the shapeless sand-hills, which stretched away, one behind another, without end, and seeming as if heaved up and washed by the sea, then left bare to sight.

"There is little that 's better," answered the man.

"And have you no other growth than this yellowish, reedy grass, that spears up so scantily out of these hills of sand?"

"'T is not so ill a sight to us, either, who have nothing greener," answered the man, a little hurt. "And there 's a bright red berry that looks gay enough amongst it. But peace! for here 's the hut of the dying man."

It was of rough boards, some of which hung loose and creaking in the wind. It was turned almost black, except on the side towards the sea, which shone with a grayish crust; and a corner of a decayed chimney was seen coming out but a little above the roof. On the ridge of one of the sand-hills by the house stood, with

his drooping head from them, the starved, sharp-boned horse, the sand whirling round him like drifting snow. "Poor fellow!" said the man; "when I first saw him, he was full of mettle, and snuffed the air, and looked with pricked ears and wild eyes out upon the sea, as if he would bound over it."

The old woman opened the door cautiously. A gray-headed man was sitting by a sort of crib of rough boards, in which lay Thornton, his eyes closed, his cheek hollow and pale, and his mouth relaxed and open.

"Is this he," said she to herself, as she looked upon him, "of the burning eye and hot cheek and firm-set mouth, of fiery and untamed passions? I did not look to see you come to such an end, much as I feared for you. May your sufferings here be some atonement for your sins. All was not evil in you. Many have died happier than you who had less of good in them, and have left a better name behind than you will leave." A tear dropped from her on his forehead. He opened his eyes sleepily upon her. The colour came to his cheek; he lifted his hand to hers with a weak motion, and looked towards the old man. — "Leave us alone for a while," said the widow.

He spoke. "I have been a sinful man," he said, in a faint, broken voice. He paused, and his look became wild. "My father, — and Isaac, Isaac, — he fell, — and my mother. Did I kill them all?" His eyes appeared to fasten on an object in the distance. He then closed his lids hard, as if trying to shut out something frightful.

"What looked you at?" asked the widow.

"O, you could not see her. She is seen of none but me. I've looked upon the sight a thousand times.

I've seen her shrouded body rising and falling with the waves, stretched out as it was on her death-bed; and it has bent not, and it has floated nearer and nearer to me, till I could look no longer. And there, too, has she stood for hours, on that small white rock yonder, that rises out of the sea," said he, trying eagerly to raise himself and look out towards it. "Yes, there has she stood, beckoning me, when the sun beat upon it; and I was made to look on it till its glare turned all around me black. I've tried to rush into the sea to her, though the waves ran so heavy between us; but I was held back till the sweat streamed down my body and I fell on the sand." He gasped for breath, and lay panting. At last he recovered a little, and, opening his eyes, looked slowly about him. His lips moved. The old woman bent over him, and heard him breathe out, "God forgive my sins!"

"God will forgive the repentant, however wicked they have been," said the widow. He gave a look of hope. — "I've asked it of Him day and night, when I had my mind; I've prayed to Him, stretched on the bare, cold rocks, and when I dared not look up. Will not you pray for me? Will none of the good pray for me?"

She knelt down by him, with her hands clasped, and looked upward. There was an agony of soul for a moment, — she could not speak. The tears rolled down her wrinkled cheeks, and then she prayed aloud. And from the shore went up a prayer fervent and holy as ever ascended from the house of God. And the dying man prayed with her, in the spirit. She ended, and, laying her hand on his forehead, said, in a solemn voice, "My son, I trust there is mercy for you with God."

He looked upward and tried to clasp his hands. It was his last effort, and he sank away with a countenance as placid as if falling into a gentle sleep.

The old widow stood for a few minutes gazing on the lifeless body. At last she said to herself, without turning away, — "He must not be laid here, as an outcast; for the sands will drive over him, and there will be no mark where he rests. I will take him with me, and lay him by the stream near my home. And, when I die, I will be gathered with him and with my child to one grave."

EDWARD AND MARY.

O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day;
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Why, man, she is mine own;
And I as rich, in having such a jewel,
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.

Same.

To love deeply and to believe our love returned, and yet to be sensible that we should not make our love known, is a hard trial. It asks the more of us, because the passion is one of the most secret in our natures. All sympathy is distasteful except that of one being, and that, in such a case, we must deny ourselves. In our sorrow at the loss of friends, though we shun direct and proffered consolations, we love the assuagings which another's pity administers to us, in the gentle tones, mild manners, kind looks, and nameless little notices which happen in the numberless affairs of daily life. But the man who loves and is unhappy starts at a soothing voice as if he were betrayed; eyes, turned in affectionate regard upon him, seem to search his heart; his way is not in the path of other men, and his suffering must be borne unseen and alone.

This severance from the world, this desertion of intercourse with man, gives a bitterness to grief, greater, perhaps, than that which any other trouble in life partakes of. Yet here, we drink of it ourselves; make our own solitude, root up the flowers in it, and watch them as they wither; we lay it bare of beauty and empty it of life, and then feel as if others had spoiled us and left us to perish. Relief from other troubles may be found in society and employment; but unprosperous love goes everywhere with a man; his thoughts are for ever upon it; it is in him and around him like the air, breaking his night-rest, and causing him to hide himself from the morning light. The music of the open sky sings a dirge over his joys, and the strong trees of the forest droop over the grave of all he holds dear.

Thwarted love is more romantic than even that which is blessed; the imagination grows forgetive, and the mind idles, in its melancholy, among fantastic shapes; all it hears or sees is turned to its own uses, taking new forms and new relations, and multiplying without end; and it wanders off amongst its own creations, which crowd thicker round it the farther it goes, till it loses sight of the world, and becomes bewildered in the many and uneven paths that itself had trodden out.

Edward Shirley was of a grave cast of character, much absorbed in his own feelings, yet with a strong affection for the few whom his reserve, and what some would call his prejudices, allowed him to take as intimates. He had read so much of wrong, and had learned to think that there was so little of true delicacy and deep and enduring love amongst men to answer to what he felt within himself, that he was sensible of something like a distaste for the world at large. But

this did not beget, as is too common, a feeling of superiority, but rather of depression; and, as is usual in such cases, his affections fastened themselves upon what could not break in upon his train of thought, and turned more and more towards inanimate objects and brutes. He was much in the fields; the beauties of nature made his chief pleasures; he was open to their purifying influences; and the innocence which God seemed to have stamped upon them was almost religion to him.

But we are made for other purposes than to have our interests begin and end in these; and he who has let his affections grow where the brooks run, and the buds are opening to the sun, will find at last that the love of some human being will twine the closer because of it about his heart, and other joys and sorrows than those he had fostered under the blue sky enter the deeper into his soul.

It has been said that no man of genius or sentiment ever lived to twenty years without being in love. It is in some sense true; for if he does not find a living idol, he will make one to himself, and be a fervent worshipper of that. When Edward was asked how it happened that such a romantic youth as he had never been in love, he answered, "I have been so, and for a long time, but my mistress is here, in the brain, and it is the only one I shall ever make knee to; for," he added, "the only woman that I could love must come so nigh in all high qualities to her who lives in my imagination, that, did she really live, she would scarcely deign to look upon such a thing as I am; so, as for real women, I think not of them." This he said with a smile, but with a somewhat heavy heart; for there were strong cravings of the affections, and he felt daily

more and more the inanity of life. As he patted the head of his brother's boy, he said to himself, "Am I never to be a father? And shall I die and leave no child to bless me? Shall I go out of the world with no one of all the living to feel a peculiar grief for me?" The time, however, was at hand, when Edward was to learn that real love was a more serious thing than that love which the imagination conjures up.

Mrs. Aston, with her daughter Mary, had lately taken a house near the estate of Edward's father. She was left with an income so small as to require of her the most simple mode of life; and her grief at the death of her husband had so absorbed other feelings, as to render this no hardship to her.

The father of Mr. Aston left a good estate, but a great number of children. The son married young, during his father's life, with no definite views of the means of supporting a family. He had been used to plenty and elegance at home, and, like most young men, never once considered how small an estate a division of his father's property would leave him.

Soon after his father's death, he found that his estate was diminishing, while he had a wife and children to support. Being but little acquainted with the world, his plans were badly laid and worse managed; poverty was eating in upon him, not rapidly, but as surely and fatally as the sea gains upon the shore; and his spirits began to forsake him almost as fast as his acquaintances and friends. Though he had never rested his happiness upon society at large, nor estimated himself by its opinions, yet remembered courtesies, taken with present neglect, went to his heart, when he thought of his wife and children and looked forward to what awaited them. He grew languid in body, and brooded

over immediate and dreaded evils, till a gloom settled down upon his mind, and his faculties seemed falling into a kind of uneasy sleep. He was roused from this for a short time, by the last feeble and irregular efforts of worn-out nature. As he sat in the easy-chair by his bed, a few days before his death, there was a tranquillity in his voice and manner, and a benign composure in his countenance, as if the inspiring light of the world to which he was going had already entered into his soul. As his wife gave him his cordial, he said, — "Heaven seems to have ordained it in mercy to those we love, that we should need their care so much, and ask of them so many attentions, in our last hours. It breaks in upon the thought that would otherwise fasten wholly on the loss they must soon bear; and their affliction is a little soothed, so long as they administer good and ease to those who are about to die. And I feel," he added, "how much, as the last and true tokens of love, they take from the bitterness of the separation which death makes sooner or later between us all."

"Why do you talk thus, Alfred?" she asked. "You have been much stronger for two days past. Hopes of better years than those gone will be medicine to you. And why should you not hope? A change may come for you as well as others; and those who knew your father may do a kind office to his son, be it but in honour of his memory."

"There is but one change for me, my love; and as to the dead, their good deeds go out of the memory of this world, as surely as they themselves enter into another. The concerns of the world are ever shifting its interests and relations; and he who was in regard yesterday will not be thought of to-morrow. But though

there is too much of forgetfulness and selfishness amongst men, I would not blame them now, nor question the providence of God, which out of this evil brings good, by making men active and considerate of ends. Let me rather take blame to myself; for though it may be from a defect of nature in me, and not from any want of disposition or endeavour, that my condition in life has been a hard one, yet I might have known my weakness, and have avoided a responsibility I could not answer. To love you as I have done, from the time I first saw you to this my last hour, has surely been no crime in me; and if making that love known to you, and shutting my eyes on those consequences I should have foreseen, has been a fault in me, the sufferings I have undergone will, I trust, be some atonement for it.

"My children," said he, turning towards them, "beware lest the ingenuity of men lead you to act against what you feel to be a virtuous impulse, for there is almost as much errour of the head as of the heart in man. At the same time, do not trust wholly to what seem innocent impulses, especially when they fall in with your desires; for what is in itself innocent may become evil from the relation it may hold to others; so that it is not enough to consider it abstractly, but to cast about and ask yourselves what may be its effect in new connections now and in future. Guide in this way your virtues by your wisdom, and you will have much of deep enjoyment now, and little to repent of hereafter."

Though this was a scene of severe grief, (for Mr. Aston was loved by his wife and children with an ardour and sincerity which few deserve or enjoy,) yet the composure of his manner tranquillized them, and their tears fell in silence.

"I have talked too much, and must lie down." They helped him to his bed; and he soon fell into a gentle sleep, with his wife's hand in his, and never waked again.

As soon as the painful concerns following Mr. Aston's death were closed, his widow moved to the house spoken of. It was a place not without its many recollections to her, for she had been often in it when a child, and had frequently met Mr. Aston there when he was a cheerful young man.

Entering a dwelling in which we had lived many years ago, brings together the past and present with a distinctness nothing else can. It is with some tinge of melancholy, even to those who have prospered in the world; for let that world have gone with us as well as it may, more of disappointments and troubles than of pleasures come to our minds at such a time; and those pleasures which are remembered as having happened in the spot we stand on are thought of, not as so many which we had enjoyed, but as so many lost to us. The trial was a hard one indeed to Mrs. Aston. When left alone, and when the events and feelings of many years came all together to her mind, in the agony of nature she uttered a sorrowful cry. She had lived to see her full hopes blasted; the misery of anxiety had mingled with her love; and the man who had made, as it were, her existence, and who might, she thought, have led a happy life had he never known her, had died of a broken heart.—"I could have borne your death, Alfred, had some common sickness taken you from me. I could have lived for our children, and the memory of you would have been an angel of comfort to me; but to know that a wasting sorrow of the mind made life comfortless to you, who had a heart for

its best joys, and cut you off so soon, — how can I bear it! O, look down upon me, and teach me how!"

The affectionate manners and constant kind attentions of her eldest daughter, Mary, at last touched her mother's heart, roused her from her abstracted grief, and made her once more sensible that there were living beings for her to love, and for whom she had many duties to fulfil.

"Have you seen your new neighbours?" said Harriet Shirley one day to her brother.

"They were at church last Sunday, but so veiled that I could not see their faces. To tell you the truth, I should hardly dare see the daughter's. Her form is the finest I ever beheld; and I am sure there was never so much beauty of movement without a mind answering to it."

"There 's a scrap of your theory again. Upon my word, Edward, you will go mad in love theoretically."

"I am half afraid of it myself, for in my walks I have seen her more than once floating before me in the sunbeams."

"O, shame on you for a lover! Sunbeams, indeed! Moonlight, my dear brother, — you must set out with melancholy and moonlight, or you will never come to a proper end. That half-drawn black veil against a pale forehead! How interesting! And all over black, — indeed, the very Black Nun herself. How could you think of throwing anything less soft than moonbeams over such a form? Now don't give me that look of grave reproof. If I do trifle out of season, it is not that I do not feel."

"Heedlessness often causes as much pain as bad intention, Harriet; and think of it as you may, will

more or less harden the hearts of those who are guilty of it. I know you are a good girl, for all your rattle, and much better than you seem. But there is no need, child, of playing the 'hypocrite reversed,' when there are hardly examples enough of goodness to keep virtue in countenance."

"You are right, Edward, you are always right; and I will try to follow your advice; but you must first follow mine. I am a generous-hearted girl, and will give it you without your asking. By a mere glimpse of this Miss Aston, she has gotten into your imagination; and unless in good time you see something more of what you would call the humdrum reality, you will be so far gone in love shortly, that when you do at last meet with her you will be lost to a certainty. So, before it is too late, come along with me, and rid yourself of your fairy vision."

They turned up the narrow, grassy lane which led to Mrs. Aston's house. It was bounded by an old, irregular stone fence, over which ran a few straggling wild vines, while the setting sun was pouring its rich light upon the yellow, green, and stone-coloured mosses which coated it over. The branches of the cedars, under which they were walking, lifted and fell with a fanning motion to the night breeze, and here and there a bird was singing her farewell to the sun, as she swung upon them. A turn in the lane brought them opposite the house. It was an old structure, projecting in front over the basement story, and running up from the coving into three sharp triangles, looking as bold and fantastic as the general officers in the old prints of the Duke of Marlborough's battles. Edward felt as much reverence for the edifice, as he would have done for one of those venerable old gentlemen of Queen Anne's time, had he made his appearance.

Mary Aston did not see Edward and his sister, as she was intent upon training up a honeysuckle to one of the carved urns pendent from the projection of the house. He stopped to watch for a moment her delicate fingers, as they moved among the leaves and flowers. Her mother was sitting in the porch, with her eyes fixed upon the shaggy house-dog, which was once her husband's. The dog was lying upon the step, with his neck stretched out over the door-sill, and resting partly on his mistress's feet. He was the first to notice the visiters. He turned round his head, got up and shook himself deliberately, and then looked up in his mistress's face, as if asking how he was to receive the newcomers.

"Mary," said her mother, rising. — Mary looked round, and then came forward a little. Harriet introduced herself and brother with her wonted easy cheerfulness, tempered by the state of the strangers. She apologized for having put off her call so long, by saying it was from the hope that her mother would before then have been well enough to have accompanied her.

"I heard that your mother was not well, and do not know but that I should have waived ceremony and called in to see her, when walking out with Mary some evening; for I remember having met her in this very house; and I believe we liked each other well at the time. There are so few early connections left to us late in life, that I should not willingly give up those I could retain." This was a general reflection, but brought with it the remembrance of her husband; and the momentary effort in overcoming her feelings showed itself in her countenance.

"Will you walk into the house?" said Mary to

Harriet and her brother; "or should you like better a seat here in the open air this bright evening?" "For my part," said he, taking hold of the broken string around which the honeysuckle had wound itself, "as I have interrupted you in your work, I will now help you finish it, if you will permit me."

There was a delicate respect in his manner, which gave an air of kindness and attention to what in another might have looked like officiousness. Besides, he had a tact for character, which kept him from any show of too sudden intimacy, where it would not be understood and frankly received. It is said that sagacious dogs possess the same quality. It was certainly so with Argus; for what with his fawning, and the fair hands of Mary kindly saving the plant from harm, Edward scarcely knew what he was about. He began with tying the bow of the knot first; it slipped, and the vine fell upon Mary's arms. This was not making the matter any better, and in the second attempt the knot was tied in the wrong place.

"The dog is troublesome," said Mary. "Get you out of the way, Argus."

"'T is all my awkwardness, Miss Aston. You must not drive Argus away. It makes me better pleased with myself to be liked by a dog; and Argus seems to take to me so much that I hope, — I hope he and I shall soon be fast friends. I will not blunder so again." — The knot was tied, and so was one which Edward could never undo after.

What little things, falling in with our natural dispositions, determine the course of our affections! The liking of an old family house-dog, acting with a first impression, did more to fix Edward in favour with Mrs. Aston and her daughter than any one of the party was aware.

"What has my brother been about? Why, I declare, Miss Aston, you will make a very florist of him. At home he never thinks of moving one of my plants into the sun for me of a cold day. He scarcely looks at them; and says that he had almost as lief be shut up in a room full of stuffed birds, as in one so stuck round with flowers and flower-pots. To be sure, he brings home a pocket full of mosses now and then, and sometimes a poor little field-flower; but if I ask what it is called, I get but the ploughboy's name for it; for under its formal botanic title it is no longer a poetic being to him."

"You forget my study-window woodbine, which is of my own planting and training."

"Why, so I did; though, if I chose to deny that you had one, nobody would believe you, after such bungling work as you made with Miss Aston's just now. And now that I think on't, you have nursed yours in that particular place, merely because, when you were young and foolish enough to believe the story of little 'Jack and the Bean,' you stole half a dozen green beans from the cook, and planted them there to see if you could n't climb up to the moon, as well as Jack; and failing of growing beans, you set out the woodbine as a remembrancer of unsuspecting innocence, and a *memento* of early hopes disappointed."

"Do you make sport of all your friends in this way?" asked Mary; "or has your brother good-naturedly consented that you should spend your merriment upon him, that you may spare your other friends? I hope there is some such compact between you, else I must be upon my guard with you."

"As to a compact, you will know all about that one

of these days. I've no doubt your sagacity will find it out soon enough for me. In the mean time, I would advise you to go on independently of my foolish humour; for be assured, however like paradox it may look, nothing so lays people open, as aiming to act always upon their good behaviour."

"You speak with a wit's confidence, Miss Shirley; but as your observation sorts well with my own judgement, I'll e'en follow it. And if my heedlessness bring down your ridicule upon me, I shall, at any rate, have one to help me bear it," she added, slightly colouring, as her eyes met Edward's turned with a serious earnestness upon her.

How hard it is at certain times, when we are most in need of it too, to find something to say! — except to the practised, who are never tortured by embarrassment, and never wanting to themselves. Harriet had moved forward to speak a word or two to Mrs. Aston, and Mary and Edward remained together, feeling sufficiently awkward, and all the while conscious that the embarrassment of each was known to the other.

We are for ever searching after great and marked causes for important events, and cannot be content to let our deepest and strongest feelings come from the small, unnoticed incidents of life. Yet an unthought-of word dropped in discourse, the voice that utters it, or the momentary look that goes with it, oftentimes thrills us more, and enters with a more quickening sense into our hearts, than all the purposed and well-ordered terms of rhetoric. To those who have something which makes them kindred to one another, these are beautiful revelations of each other's nature. Delicate and according minds hold intelligent discourse, in half-uttered words, in shifting movements, and pass-

ing expressions of the face: it is like the imagined intercourse of angels, whose thoughts and feelings are interchanged by strange and wonderful sympathies, and need no tongue to speak them. It is so in early love, with those whose characters are in agreement. And so was it in the present case. Not that Edward and Mary entered into a self-examination of their hearts; but a peculiar delight was felt by each for the first time, and life seemed a new existence to them.

"It is a fortunate thing for me," said he, at last, "that I have a multitude of foolish things about me, for my sister to make amusement out of. She would scarce care a jot for me, were I a piece of perfection. She says that she cannot away with those proper folks who never commit themselves."

"Her interest in the world will not be likely to lessen, if it measures itself by people's inadvertencies or follies," said Mary.

"What *she* are you talking about?" said Harriet, turning round. "Are you putting your heads together to make mutual defence and secret alliance against my open dealing? Come, I must break this up in good time. Your mother is going into the house, Miss Aston, for it is growing chilly. And don't you see the mist wreathing up along the meadow yonder?"

"It will do no harm to us to-night, Harriet, for the moon is rising betimes to keep it down in the lowlands; and if you will ask Miss Aston to walk to the end of the lane with you, I will insure her a walk back safe from all colds."

"I hardly know whether I shall ask her," said Harriet, at the same time taking her arm within her own and walking on; "for you must know, Miss Aston, that though my brother generally avoids our sex, yet, when

caught amongst them, he is one of the most scrupulously polite gentlemen in the world. Now, think of his situation when we reach the end of the lane! Could he see you returning by the dark, giant trunks of all these trees, and without a protector? And yet it would never do to leave me standing alone, though I am his sister. What a ridiculous embarrassment he would be thrown into, — a step forward and then a step back, till brought to a perfect stand-still!"

"A Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, my sister."

"True, but with an opposite leaning. And as you would have to choose one and refuse the other, if I were to represent Comedy, as, in such case, I presume I needs must, it is plain enough, Sir Melancholy, what would be my fate."

"Your imagined difficulty is all over now, Miss Shirley, for here comes one who has been my brave attendant this many a day," said Mary, patting Argus on the head as he made up to her side. "I have half a mind to turn you off with him and ask Mr. Shirley to wait upon me, to punish you for all you have said to-night."

"That would hardly be fair, Miss Aston. My sister's ridicule might hurt the poor fellow's feelings; and, though very sagacious, the odds might be against him at an encounter of wits."

Here, with one common and blending sense of happiness, they reached the gateway, and then parted for the first time. How indistinctly busy the mind is at parting after a first meeting, where the heart has been at all touched.

From the air of politicians, it must be a mighty easy matter to see into the causes of the great changes in

the world. There is scarce a word of truth in all they say, let them talk about it ever so plausibly. From your intangible, theoretic German, down to your mere matter-of-fact man, who dates Bonaparte's overthrow from the rise of sugars in France, they are all wrong. The causes assigned by each may have a share in what is done. So we may cut a twig, and set it in the ground, and keep the earth loose about it; and in a few years what diminutive things we look like under its long, cool branches! Its growth is as hidden as it is silent; and when it lays itself out upon the air, a beautiful mystery, with its web of glossy leaves interwoven with golden sunshine, do we look up into it with any other feeling than that of glad worship? And yet we know more of its origin, and had more to do with making it what it now is, than we have part or knowledge in a tithe of what we decide on so familiarly.

If outward and noted events keep us so in ignorance of their nature, what are we to do with the subtile movements of the mind? They are quick or slow; they agitate us violently, or are scarcely felt; hurry us suddenly forward after what we a little before followed sluggishly and at intervals, or turn us about in pursuit of that which we had passed by with indifference; and all from causes so strange or so hidden, that we cannot comprehend them, or search them out.

Edward, within an hour or two, had passed through some of the most simple and ordinary events that take place in our common intercourse; yet he had come out of them altogether changed. He who had looked with an idle eye, and with an estranged mind, upon what was the concern of others, found his being suddenly swallowed up in that of another. "How gross is everything else on earth," said he to himself, "compared

with the beautiful refinement of a woman!" And how monotonous and tame and indistinct was the former being of his imagination, at that moment, compared to Mary Aston!

After walking home in silence with his sister, he continued rambling about. The house was too close and confined for him. There was a quick and warm pulsation through him, and his frame was expanding and beating with new life. Beautiful images were coming and going fast and bright as the light; and all things that drank the moist night air and slept under the moon, or shone and moved beneath it, gave him a new delight, and he loved them more than ever. He was not sensible how far he had wandered, till the low, broad chimney of Mrs. Aston's house met his eye, as it stood out in strong and sharp relief against the moonlight. Though alone, the colour rose in his cheek, and he felt a beating at his heart. His soul was in a moment laid open to him. What he had not been conscious of as being anything more than one of those bright and hopeful moments which visit us sometimes, we know not why, when "an unaccustomed spirit lifts us above the ground with happy thoughts," he now found to be one of the most serious circumstances that can happen to a man of sentiment; and he was forced to acknowledge to himself that he was in love.

Almost all men, at some time or other, are carried out of their course by influences that act upon them with the power and silence of the currents of the ocean; and ignorant how to keep their reckoning, or careless about it, the bigger part are wrecked. Edward found that he had been swept unconsciously along. Still, all was so beautiful, that he did not consider whither the stream was carrying him; for the clouds,

and jutting rocks, and islands with all their trees upon them, glassed themselves in the sea, and made a fairy show for him to muse upon.

He drew near the house. As he moved along under the branches of the large trees, their noise overhead was like that of the surf. There was something ominous and wizard-like in the confused and wild multitude of their motions and sounds; and a melancholy foreboding crossed his mind like the shadow of a cloud. As he passed out from underneath their shade, his cheerfulness returned; and as he looked toward the dwelling of Mary Aston, he felt a blessing on him. The uncouth variety in the old building looked more grotesque than before, in the moonlight; and the shadows of its odd peaks and projections, falling at random upon it, seemed like fantastic creatures of the night, holding their games in its sides and nooks. It was a tolerable representation of the mind of him who was looking at it. For images and thoughts were going through that without order, and of which he knew not whence they came, or whither they tended. His intellect and his sensations were under the sway of some powers without him, which at one time expanded him with hope, and then again overcame him with a feeling of despair. He lingered near the house a long time, till at length the sense of the endless duration and of the continued going-on of life, with which nature impresses us, gradually gave a steadiness and cheerfulness to his thoughts; and the fixed sky, and bright moon, and the image of Mary Aston, all together wrought his soul to harmony, and, tranquil and happy, he returned home.

A real lover is quite an unaccountable creature when awake; it would be altogether in vain to attempt describing his dreams. Edward did not wake in the

morning, however, in that state of composed indifference in which we generally are when coming out of sleep. Before he was roused to a full possession of his faculties, there was a vague notion of something important to be done, or of some uncommon event in which he was concerned.

He did not find his sister at the breakfast-table to tease him and divert him from his abstraction. He grew more and more restless as the day advanced; his books seemed dull; he was wearied of sitting still, and as tired of walking. When we are in perplexity from having forgotten what we came after, we go back to the place we started from, to set all right. Had he followed this method, and gone to Mrs. Aston's, he would have rid himself at once of his uneasiness. He was sensible enough of this. "It is not within rule," said he to himself. "What preposterous things these rules of society are,—for all but blockheads and impertinents!" One in love must be allowed to say so, yet he is wrong. We all stand in need of these rules, more or less; and if they sometimes appear merely troublesome, a little trouble is well for the best of us. Facilities, for the most part, do more harm than good: children of the next generation will find it so, and thank us little for what our half vanity and half affection are now so busy about for them.

Addison has written an essay, showing why it is harder to conceive of eternity as never beginning than as never ending. Edward was as much puzzled to set bounds to his day, as we are to think of eternity without days. It closed upon him at last; and the next went on the same way, till he found himself, near the end of it, in a narrow lane back of Mrs. Aston's dwelling.

Though Mary Aston possessed much of that equa-

bility and patience of temper for which women are so proverbial, it would look like a repetition of what has just been said, to describe her feelings since she had parted from Edward. She had walked out towards nightfall, that the cool air might refresh her, and, without being at all conscious of it, from a feeling which goes for hope, but which perhaps has more of wishing than of expectation in it, that before she returned she might see Edward. Our wishes often give us expectations, but they as often direct our conduct where we have nothing to hope. If they can do it in no other way, they will bring it about by putting us into a kind of fanciful state, and making the imaginary pass for the actual. It is not very wide of that condition which a child is in, when he is mounted upon a walking-stick and plays it is his horse. It is a little ludicrous and mortifying, that wise and tall men should be caught in this way riding their own canes; so we will say nothing more about it.

The colour rose in the cheek of each, and their manner was slightly embarrassed, as they suddenly met in the lane; but the tremulousness of the voice told better than these what was at their hearts. Edward of course passed the evening with Mary and her mother. "You must pardon my staying to so late an hour. I am not a frequent visiter, but I never know when it is time to go." This he said as he rose, and, against all rule, leaned over the back of his chair. It was some time before he quitted this, and there was longer lingering at the door-step; for Mary's voice made music so soft and clear in the still night air, and her eyes, turned upward to the moon, were so like a kindred heaven, answering to that over their heads, — how could he quit it all, to be alone again?

"Is it you, Mrs. Aston, or Mary," said Harriet, one day, "who has wrought such a change in my once steady brother? Formerly he was never abroad, and now he is never at home. I can answer the question myself. He comes to moralize upon the sin and vanity of the world, along with your mother, Mary. He rarely talks to girls like us; for he says he seldom meets with any who do not show that they are all the time having an eye to themselves, let the subject they are conversing about be ever so serious or important. In his brotherly fondness he would make me an exception, I dare say, did I ever talk seriously. The most I ever arrive at is to make him laugh, and be called a rattle-head for my pains."

"His remark, I fear, is as true as any general one may be," answered Mary. "And he might have extended it to those of his own sex, though a little qualified, perhaps, had he been as much inclined to observe them. The truth is, both girls and young men appear to more advantage when conversing with the old of an opposite sex, than with those of their own age. I always take most satisfaction in talking with men who are turning gray."

"Should not Mary in all fairness except my grave brother, Mrs. Aston, who goes about looking as if he was always thinking upon something, as our old housekeeper says?"

"That were scarce necessary," said Mrs. Aston, not observing the flush which her reply threw over Mary's face; "for I have scarcely met with a man so apparently sincere and in earnest in what he was about. Besides, there is so much of that propriety of principle in his manner, which keeps off encroachment, without the appearance of being on one's guard, and such a

simple and unostentatious delicacy, — unlike that showy complaisance which passes for good-breeding, but is really vulgarity, because assuming a superiority over him towards whom it is displayed, — that I should argue ill of the discernment, and almost of the character, of one who did not from the first feel the beauty of his conduct."

"What a compliment I have to carry home to my brother!" said Harriet, going.

"You must not carry any from me, Harriet."

"Why not, Madam? They are the best things in the world to put folks in good-humour. I invent one for my prim aunt, when I go to pass the day with her, — as I sometimes am obliged to do, because mamma says it is proper to visit our relations."

"Perhaps your aunt is too old to be injured by them," said Mary. "Yet there is nothing in the world which has turned so many wise folks into fools."

"I will be revenged for your reflection on my aunt's vanity. And to pay you for your philosophy, which ill becomes a miss in her teens, I shall dress up the compliment, and with a happy vagueness leave my brother to conjecture whether it be from mother or child."

"Don't put your brother upon any such guesses. If you needs must repeat it, let him know that it came from an elderly lady, and not from a young one."

"Now, I did not expect that from you, ma'am, who had just said so much about his wisdom; and when it was but the other night, too, that he talked so gravely about virtue's only being sure when resting wholly on itself, and finding its satisfactions within, and not in distinctions that attend it abroad. Come, Mary, you sha'n't look so gravely at me," said Harriet, as Mary followed her to the door. "You need not fear me.

And even if I should divert myself with some idle story, my brother thinks too justly of you, I trust, to take anything of the kind that I may say for more than mere foolery." — Mary returned the pressure of Harriet's hand, and wished her cheerfully a pleasant walk home, as she sprang lightly from the step.

Mary went happy to her chamber, reflecting upon the warm manner in which her mother had spoken in praise of Edward, and thinking her the best mother that ever lived.

Though Harriet was no go-between, and despised anything like match-making as heartily as it deserves to be, yet she had such a love for her brother, and took so deep an interest in whatever concerned him, and was so desirous that he might shake off that melancholy which too often preyed upon him, by finding an object for his affections to fasten on, that she could not avoid showing how happy it made her to find that there was so much of sympathy between him and Mary. Upon her return home, she could not help letting fall certain expressions and remarks which referred to Mrs. Aston's opinion of him, and at the same time showing what she surmised were Mary's feelings. This she did cautiously and in a playful way; for she well understood that Edward was not a man to be talked to, or to talk of his affections; and she knew how to respect him for it.

"Am I not sure that she loves me?" said he, one day, as he shut his study door. "And why should I delay? Is it not trifling with myself, and what is more, with a woman of delicate and ardent feelings?" — He had asked himself these very questions before. And those who go to proffer terms of marriage with certificates of property and letters of recommendation

in their pockets, must think him a very odd sort of fellow to make such a pother about that which so many before him have done off-hand. Some are blessed with an undisturbed worldly wisdom; while others are carried to and fro, or hurried or delayed, by impulses and sensations made up of exquisite pleasures and acute pains, over which they have little control. Heaven help these last! The first can take care of themselves, at least for this world.

There are men of a certain refined sense, brave men too, and with not a whit of awkward bashfulness in them either, who, even where they knew the affection to be mutual, could no more tell a woman that they loved her, just when they chose to fix the time for doing so, than Cowper could have read in the House of Lords.

Urgent business of his father's prevented Edward for some time from seeing Mary. When he did, it was on a mild evening of a warm day. The parlour door was open, and he entered the room, and drew near the window where she was sitting, without being observed by her; for she was lost in painful reflections. To feel neglected by him would have been hard enough to bear; but the fear that Harriet, in her thoughtless chat, had said something which had lowered her in his opinion, was intolerable. The ill opinion of such a man was almost enough to make even the innocent feel the shame of guilt.

The melancholy of those we love, when a token of their interest in us, gives us nearly as deep a delight, for a time, as when we think we make them happy, — perhaps a deeper. For almost any one may move another to pleasure, and the degrees of pleasure cannot always be distinguished. But when one is in grief

from some small circumstance in love, we have an assurance that there can be no mistake. When Edward looked upon Mary's fine face, and saw it overcast, and said to himself, "This is because of me," an exquisite feeling thrilled through his heart, at the same time that she was dearer to him than ever. His voice betrayed his emotion as he spoke to her; and suddenly raising her eyes, she saw his serious countenance lighted up with a smile full of love. There was an answering one in Mary's face, mingled with an expression of confusion, and something like pain, from surprise and the suddenness of the change in her feelings. This was a fine moment for a lover. Not so for Edward; he was too full of delightful sensations, and could only look on in still rapture. When he at last spoke, his words had little to do with his immediate thoughts, and he was as far from his purpose as before. She moved a little, and Edward sat down by her in the old window-seat. Her beautifully turned arm, and tapering, dimpled fingers, were resting on the window-ledge.

"Did I ever see that ring before?" said he.

"No, for I have just received it. 'It was a seal-ring of my grandfather's,'" she added, half laughing.

"Whether your grandfather's or a younger man's," he replied, looking somewhat anxiously in her face, "it is a very curious one."

She was half offended and half pleased at this show of jealous regard.

"Upon my word, Mr. Shirley, do you think that it is my way to wear young men's rings?" Then, changing her voice to her usual tone, — "It is rather a singular one. Will you look at it?" she asked frankly, at the same time drawing it from her finger.

If we are not very careful, we cannot take so little a

thing as a ring from another, without the hands touching slightly; nor is it very easy for two persons to examine curiously so small a matter without their heads coming very near to each other. It is ten to one that, at any rate, you will feel some stray, curling lock touching every now and then against your forehead. You may know that it is not your own, by the thrill it sends through the brain and bosom. There is a breath too, pure as air, which reaches you; — there is no such atmosphere in the whole world for sensations. There needs no talking at such a moment; there is a close and silent communion of the thoughts and wakened senses, by which we understand each other better than we could by words, though we culled the choicest from the language of every nation on the globe. Even the tones of love, in their utmost softness, would break up the beautiful working of the charm, at such a time, and turn all to common life again.

It was Mary who took the ring off, but it was Edward who put it on again; and it was done with such respectful delicacy, and with so gentle a touch of the hand, that a dedicated nun could not have been offended at it. Mary's heart beat quick; and as her eyes fell on the ring, that heart asked, Is it not a pledge of his love?

It was, indeed, love that had done it all; but it was inaudible love, love that understood not itself, nor why it had done thus. It was the bud of love, and the hour had not yet come for its opening.

The conversation took a moralizing turn, and a good deal was said about the feelings, — not in a prosing way, however. There was a closer intimacy in the cast of it than there had been before. They knew the character of each other's minds and dispositions as

well as if they had lived together for years. Some will say this is impossible. The opinion of such persons may be true enough, so far as concerns themselves and half the world beside. Most people might as well be married by proxy, like princes, as to any knowledge they have of one another's character at the time. And it is a pity that many of them could not remain in their ignorance, so badly are they sorted. The most they ever arrive at is a sort of unwillingness to be long apart, from a habit of having been much together. There are peculiar people, however, who get as much into what is essential in each other's character in half an hour's acquaintance, by what is said and the manner in which things are said or done, as others would, should they pass together the lives of a patriarch and his spouse. — Then, says one, you are a believer in love at first sight? — I believe that such a thing may be, or something very like it.

They were walking in front of the house when the time came for Edward to return home.

"Stay a moment, Mr. Shirley; late as it is, you must help me about my woodbine once more, before you go; for see, the wind has blown it down."

As they were training it up, their eyes met, and their looks showed to each other that the time when they first saw one another, and much which had passed since, were in their thoughts.

"What did you think of me then?" said he.

"When?" she asked. And half ashamed of feigning ignorance of what she well understood, — "Think of you? Why, much as I do now, and as I trust I always shall."

"If I interpret this according to my wishes, shall I be right?"

"I hope so," she said, colouring; "or what could your opinion be of me, else?"

"The same as it always has been and must be. For, much as I should suffer to be without your esteem and kind regard, Mary, you will always have mine. I would say more, but I know not why I cannot now. Need I say it? You know what I feel, for I have ever shown myself to you what I am, though I cannot to all the world. All is not well at my heart now. 'T is strange. I was the happiest man alive a moment ago. No matter; we shall meet again to-morrow. Whether we meet or not, whether good or ill come to me," he said, taking her hand within both his, and pressing it earnestly, "may God's best blessing rest upon you, Mary." His voice faltered. Mary tried to speak. It was in vain. Her lips moved, but there was no sound. She raised her eyes to his with an almost imploring look. She was not given to tears like the rest of her sex, yet they filled her eyes now. Edward kissed away one that stood on her cheek, and hurried from her with a bewildered mind.

Are not our feelings sometimes sent, like prophets, to make us ready against evils which we see not, but which are nigh at hand? Edward continued his walk till a late hour, that he might rid himself of the feverish restlessness which tormented his body and mind.

Mr. Shirley had been from home for a couple of days, and had returned during his son's absence. As Edward drew near the house, he saw a light in his father's study. He perceived, by the frequent darkening of the lamp, that some one was walking the room at a rapid pace. His feelings were in a state to bode ill. It was unusual for his father to be up at so late an hour, and Edward remembered, that, for several days

before his leaving home, he had appeared anxious and abstracted. Edward's character was so matured and of so serious a cast, that his father treated him rather as a companion than a son. He entered the house, and went immediately to the study door and knocked.

"Who 's there?" called out his father.

"It is I, Sir."

"O! Edward? Come in!"

Instead of turning and giving Edward his hand as usual, Mr. Shirley continued walking the room without noticing him. Edward looked at his father. The room shook as he walked to and fro, and the foot seemed to grasp the floor at every step. His arms were folded with a convulsive closeness over his breast. The muscles of his face worked hard, and the blood was beating quick through the clear, high veins of his temples. — "I have been waiting for you this hour," said he at last, in an under voice, and without turning his head. His pace grew quicker, and each fibre of his body vibrated with agony, and seemed stretched till ready to snap. — "You are all beggars," he cried out at last, throwing himself into his chair and gasping for breath. Edward's alarm scarcely left him conscious of what his father had said. He went to him, and, leaning over him, spoke in so affectionate a voice that it touched him to the quick. The tears started to his father's eyes: it was the first time he had suffered man to see one there. He grew composed at last, and, bracing himself to the act, told his son all that had happened.

It appeared that Mr. Shirley's fortune had been an ample one; but having attached certain notions of princely grandeur to wealth, he had, in a moment of ambition, put the whole at stake in expectation of

doubling it; the speculation had failed, and he had lost nearly all.

"You are much exhausted, Sir," said Edward, after talking with his father a long time; "you must go to bed, and endeavour to sleep. In the morning we will see what can be done. I hope all is not so bad as you think." — "Good night to you, Edward," said he, much moved. "I hope this news has not come too late to prevent your involving another in our calamity. If not, I know you have too much principle in you to bind such a woman to your hard fortune, let the effort to stop short cost you what it may."

"I know not; I hope, — I fear ——"

"Well, well! we will not talk of that now," said his father, pressing his hand. Edward left the room.

For a man of a shy disposition and retired habits, who has nurtured his romantic thoughts in solitary musing, whose intellectual being is made up of sentiment and imagination, and who has never thought nor cared for business or gain, to attempt of a sudden to change his nature, and, ignorant as an infant, to find out for himself through the intricacies of trades or professions a way amid shrewd, calculating, and knowing men, is almost a hopeless undertaking. Though Edward did not want energy or perseverance, he was not presumptuous; and understanding his own character well, and how far nature and education had unfitted him for a man of business, he was too well principled and generous to endure the thought of connecting another with his uncertain fortunes, and of feeling that, while he might be vainly struggling on, her life was wearing away in delayed hopes.

As the door shut upon him, it seemed as if each living thing had quitted him, and he was left alone upon the

earth. Though his passions were deep-rooted, and the smallest fibres of them were alive with the love of Mary, his father's sufferings had made him for the moment forgetful of his own. And now that he was left to himself, and saw that he was shorn of hope, it was the thought of Mary that wrung him. "A few hours ago, Mary, and you came to me with the elastic spring of a glad and fond spirit, and your countenance opened and brightened like the morning upon me. It is over now; the light is shut out, and you must wither in the cold and damp which is ready to fall on you. I could endure my own sufferings, and go to my grave alone, sooner or later, as God might will for me; but I cannot, I cannot bear the thought of what you will suffer, — you, whom I have taught to love me so." He continued walking the room till the birds began sending out short, broken notes, and stirring themselves in the trees. He went to his chamber, and, over-wearied, fell into a short, uneasy sleep.

Though his feelings were stronger than fall to the lot of many, they were in their nature so deep and still, and so mixed with the intellectual, as not to overcome his self-control. He met the family at breakfast with a composed countenance; and immediately after went with his father to the study, and assisted him, as far as he was able, in adjusting his papers. All was in order in a few days to deliver up to the creditors. As they were few, and gentlemen who had confidence in Mr. Shirley, everything was done to spare his feelings. He was sensible of it with mixed pride and gratitude. The family were to leave the mansion and retire to a small house, which, with a trifling income, was all that was left of the estate.

"Harriet," said Edward, the morning after he was

made acquainted with his father's loss, "will you write to Mary, and tell her what has happened? I cannot see her till everything is adjusted. It would unman me; and there is much to be done, and my poor father must have my assistance. — You must command yourself better," said he, in a low and steady tone.

"I will, I will, Edward; but I could not have loved a sister better; and I have almost lived upon the thought, of late, that I was to see you both so happy soon! It is all over now." Edward hurried out of the room.

In a few days the family were ready to depart. They entered an old family coach, and drove off as silently as if following a friend to the grave. Edward was to remain behind till everything was delivered up. The furniture was sent away to the city to be sold, and he was now ready to follow his parents and sister.

So long as there remained any duties for Edward to fulfil, he bore up firmly against this sudden destruction of his hopes. The unrelaxed effort had nearly exhausted mind and body, and yet the hardest trial was to come. He was to meet Mary, and to part with her, perhaps for ever. "Only a few days ago," thought he, "while I was absent from her, I was impatient till the hour came that I was to meet her. I scarcely dare think of doing it now."

The solitude of the house oppressed him, and seemed to forebode evil. "I can bear it no longer; something terrible haunts me." As he was hurrying out of the house, old Jacob, the only domestic left behind, met him at the door. "Where are you going this sad night, Mr. Edward? The mist drops from the leaves like rain, and a heavy storm is setting in. It has been

brewing all day long, and begins to stir hard in the trees."

"So much the better," he muttered, pressing forward; then, stopping a moment, — "Have all ready to start by sunrise, Jacob."

"It will be hard to tell that time to-morrow, Sir," answered Jacob, as Edward was shutting the door, "if I know what the weather will be from one hour to another."

The night had nearly shut in, and the rocks and trunks of trees, which were almost black from the dampness which had been upon them the day through, seemed to his disturbed mind like gloomy monsters watching his steps, as he half caught their forms through the thick twilight, while hastening by them. "Is this the place where I first walked by the side of Mary and heard her voice?" thought he, as he passed along the avenue. "It is all changed, and I'm left alone."

He drew near the house. It was lost in the darkness, except where the heavy mist reflected back the light of a candle shining through the parlour window, giving through the dimness to the peaks and juts the appearance of pale, uncertain flames shooting up into sharp points. No other light could be seen. "How quietly it shines! And is all within as tranquil as that flame? No, Mary, I will not wrong you; you could not so forget me."

As he came nearer the house, his blood throbbed quicker; and he started at the sound of the beating of his heart. He waited a moment to gain a little self-command. The door was opened to him, and he entered the parlour. Mrs. Aston was in the room alone. As she turned and saw his pale and worn

countenance, she started; but suddenly recovering herself, she went up to him and took him kindly by the hand.

"Why have you kept away from us so long?" inquired she, in a gentle but agitated voice. "You do not take us for summer flies, I know, Mr. Shirley."

"If I did, Madam, I should not come now to trouble you this last time."

"Do you go so soon? Are we not to see you again?"

"I must go to-morrow," he answered, hurriedly. "Whether I shall see you again, I know not, I cannot tell."

"Better days will come to you; you are but a young man, Mr. Shirley."

He shook his head, but made no reply. They both continued for some time silent.

He at last approached Mrs. Aston, and said, "Can I see Mary for a few minutes before I go?" A slight colour rose in his cheek, but the sad expression of his face was unchanged when he added, "It would be childish in me, dear Mrs. Aston, to suppose that you are ignorant of my feelings. But," the flush of pride heightening his colour as he spoke, "I believe you know me too well to fear, that, unskilled in affairs as I am, and with little reason from my cast of character for hope of success, I can be so weak or selfish as to bind another to me in my evil fortunes."

"I need not answer that, Mr. Shirley." The tears filled her eyes as she put out her hand once more and gave him her blessing. She left the room, and, meeting Mary, told her that Edward was below.

He was walking the room with a hurried step as Mary entered. She attempted to go towards him, but

her frame shook, and she tottered towards a chair. He sprang forward and caught her before she sank to the floor. Her face was deadly pale, and her eye for a moment glazed. The sound of his voice recalled her senses; but as she raised her head, there was a haggard look in his countenance that made her shudder, and she covered her eyes with her hand. — "Do you shrink from me, Mary?" "O, no, no, Edward. But do not, do not look so strangely on me. Look as calm and kind as you spoke then, and I will never turn from you." — Her head fell upon his shoulder, and she sobbed audibly. His face was turned upward; his lips moved; he would have prayed aloud for blessing and comfort on her; but an inarticulate sound was all that reached Mary's ear. She raised her head and gazed upon his face. How changed! Affliction had not left it, but there was a brightness, a rapture, in it, which she could almost have worshipped. It was one of those passing exaltations of the spirit which sometimes in our misery lift us for a moment above the earth. It left him, and his countenance fell.

"Is it gone? is it gone?" cried Mary; "and is there no comfort left us?"

"None, none, — at least for me!"

"O, do not add to my misery, Edward, by being ungenerous to me. Do not say that I can change and find comfort, when you cannot."

"Forgive me, Mary; I did not mean to be unkind. I scarce know what I say; — my brain has been sadly bewildered with what I have gone through in a few short days. But this parting would not, you know it would not, be so hard to me, could I believe you a creature made to change. Sit down by me, and hear me for a moment, and then I must leave you."

He spoke so low, and with so much effort, that his voice was scarcely audible; yet there was something determined in it. — "I cannot blame myself for having given way so far to my feelings to-night. After what passed between us when we last met, Mary, it would have been unmanly, it would have been a base insult to the delicacy of your character, for me to have treated you otherwise now than as if you had acknowledged a return of my love for you. I have told my father, — I scarce know what I have told him. Your mother knows all. And here, — all must end here. We must part, Mary!"

"All? Then all is to be as though it had never been. Say you so, Edward?"

"Do not mistake me, Mary; we must not part in unkindness. There is enough of sorrow without that. Though I will not give over without a struggle, yet I am poor now, and something tells me that, with all my efforts, I shall die so. The seal is on me, and I shall carry it to my grave, I fear. I hope that is not far off. Could I but see you happy, it would be some consolation to me. — No, no, it would not. I could not bear that all which I have dwelt upon as so peculiar and lovely in your character should change, even to relieve you from what you suffer. Yet you must not be bound to me by any understanding between us. I know there is that in you which will always make me dear to you. Surely I need not speak of myself; — but I see it! — you will never be mine!"

"Are we to meet each other no more, then? Are we to live only in the memory of each other, and without hope? I will be sincere with you, Edward, and will not add to what you suffer by saying that you could not make this sacrifice did it cost you what

you tell me it does. I know," said she, raising her eyes to his with a look of confidence, "the struggle will be as hard to you, and endure as long, as with me: I could not say more. Miserable as it will make us, I know that your feeling is grounded in honour. And though it may seem to have connected with it a doubt whether time and absence may not change my love for you, I cannot wrong you so much as to think you could be so suspicious of me. I know you better, Edward, indeed I do."

"This is noble and generous in you, Mary," said he, pressing her to his heart. "I did not look for all this, even from you. How can I part from you! Yet I must, — it must be done now!" he cried, starting suddenly from her. In a moment he was ready. As he turned, she came to him. There was hopeless misery in her face. She flung her arms about his neck, and hung powerless upon him as he held her to his bosom.

"Mary! Mary!" he repeated. She made no answer. The wind drove violently against the window, and the rain dashed against it like a flood. She shivered as if the cold blast struck her. "Must he go, and in the storm and rain too?" murmured she to herself. At length she raised herself a little. "Do not fear for me, Edward. It is past, — I am better now. Go! go!" He stood for a moment, — he would have said something, — it was in vain. He caught her passionately to him, then, darting from her, left the house.

Mrs. Aston heard the door shut after him. She went down to her daughter, and found her sitting, leaning forward, with her eyes fixed on the door. She did not move them as her mother entered; and there was a stupor over her countenance. Mrs. Aston took

her by the hand, but she did not appear to heed it. "You must go to bed," said her mother, putting her arm round her, and gently raising her from the chair. She made no answer, but suffered herself to be partly carried to her chamber. When she was in bed, her mother sat down by her; but she seemed not to notice it, and presently fell asleep, as if unconscious of what had happened.

The night was so dark, that the atmosphere was like some deep black body directly before the eye. Edward hurried forward down the avenue. The trees, which raved and roared in the wind like fiends of the storm, served to guide him by their sound. As he quitted them, and their noise died gradually in the distance, he groped his way homeward. He reached the house with a mind as bewildered as in a troubled dream. The instant change from the tumult and uproar of the storm to the stillness and calm within doors brought back what had passed, with startling suddenness. He went into the room where Jacob was sitting, waiting for him, and, taking up a lamp, passed by without looking at him. — "Poor Mr. Edward!" said Jacob to himself, as he took the remaining light to go to bed; "it is hard that you, who are so good, should suffer so."

Edward could not go to rest. He went into his father's study, and then from one room to another, traversing the house. He was for a while in that vague and idle state which the mind is thrown into at intervals, in extreme suffering, taking notice of trifles, and remembering a multitude of unmeaning things, while half unconscious of the affliction which is ready to press again upon it. His eyes wandered vacantly over the naked walls, till they at last rested on the dis-

coloured places where the pictures had hung. He was not sensible at first at what he was looking; but his mind was by degrees moved, and he was presently brought again to the recollection of his condition. If the earth had been swept of every living thing but himself, the sense of desertion could not have weighed heavier upon him. He passed on to his chamber; the wind moaned in the chimneys; and as he trod over the bare floors, the empty house was filled with the sharp echoes of his steps, which seemed to chatter and mock at him.

The next morning he began his journey. The violence of the storm was over, but it was a dull, drizzly day. He passed it in silence, busy with his melancholy thoughts. He took little notice of what was about him. The home of Mary Aston, as he had seen it in storm and sunshine, was in his mind. He thought of her deep love for him, her serious and unchanging mind, her frank and confiding looks and manner towards him. He would have laid down his life to give her that peace which was hers before she knew him. He would have done more, — he would have dragged on a life of suffering.

Jacob spoke the first word that was uttered. "We are half through our journey, Sir. I know it by the wood just ahead of us." Edward looked out upon the wood, by way of answer to Jacob. It was now autumn, and the leaves, in their gaudy and varied colours, hung dripping and flagging in the damp air. It seemed a cruel taunt upon the vain hopes and forced mirth of the world. Edward shut his eyes upon the sight, heart-sick. There was none of the spirit of scorn in him; he felt it rather as an emblem of his own withered joys. The day dragged on heavily; and

he reached his new home about dark, tired in body and mind.

One who had seen him when he met the family would have known little of what his inward sufferings were. Beside his aversion to discovering his deeper feelings, even to his own family, he was conscious of the duty upon him to strengthen the fortitude of his parents. His endeavours were of little benefit to his father. Mr. Shirley was of a high, restless spirit; and his sudden fall from wealth and distinction and the stir of society heated his warm temperament, and he died of fever, after a few months' illness. Edward was as a nurse to his father through his sickness, and, after Mr. Shirley's death, was as kind and attentive to his mother, and as anxious about those little things which he thought would turn away her mind from her afflictions, as if his spirit had been free of all trouble, except as it concerned her. Harriet spoke of it in a letter, in answer to one she had received from Mary, not long after Mr. Shirley's death. — "My mother feels his kindness deeply. She cannot speak of it to me, without shedding tears. He is soon to leave us. I do not know how my mother will bear his departure. Something, all the while, is making him secretly miserable. I can only conjecture what has taken place, for your letter reveals nothing, and his is so sacred a melancholy, that I dare not break in upon it."

These exertions were for Edward's good. For sensitive minds are prone to a melancholy, which may in the end weaken the intellect, unless they have some object to engage them, and give action to the affections.

The winter was gloomy and cold, the spring opened late, the weather continued raw and uncomfortable,

and there appeared to be a sympathizing dejection throughout nature. The time came for Edward's departure, and he prepared to leave home. Though he had sustained so hard a struggle in parting with Mary, it was not because he thought, for a moment, of sitting down in hopeless inaction; but his father's sickness and death had prevented his putting his plans into immediate execution.

In the midst of this dreariness and dejection, a relation of Mrs. Shirley returned from abroad, after an absence of some years. This gentleman's name was Pennington. Though older than Edward's father, they were many years fast friends. Unfortunately, some trifling controversy took place between them; and both having a little too much pride, and enough of the punctilious character which was so marked in the old-fashioned gentry, a hasty altercation ended in a lasting separation; for neither of them could think of making advances toward a reconciliation. Though this was a cause of mutual uneasiness, and each in a short time felt the same regard and attachment to the other as ever, Mr. Pennington went abroad on some commercial speculations without their bidding each other farewell; and Edward's father was too proud to suffer his old friend to be made acquainted with the misfortunes which afterwards befell him. "It was my hasty temper," said Mr. Shirley to his son, a little before his death, "which made the breach between us. I have stood out foolishly against a reconciliation; and repentance comes too late."

Mr. Pennington was much affected, on his arrival in the country, at hearing of Mr. Shirley's loss of property, and death. He wrote to Mrs. Shirley, and spoke, in the most delicate manner, of the regret and self-reproach

he felt in having suffered any criminal pride on his part to separate him from a man for whom he had always had so great esteem and friendship. He expressed the earnest wish that he might be allowed to visit the family, and to atone for the past, so far as was now left to him, by every mark of kindness and regard which he could pay.

He arrived in a few days, and was received as one of his character deserved to be. Edward and Harriet were delighted with him. Though a man of deep feelings, he had an energetic and clear mind; and at the same time that he was not forgetful, or careless of the loss of friends, or of the sufferings of others, he was possessed of that practical philosophy, which, by a constant aim at the improvement and happiness of those about us, begets healthful activity of mind, and an habitual cheerfulness of the spirits. Although he had been so long abroad, he had lost nothing of his former character; and his snuff-coloured, broad-skirted coat, waistcoat-flaps, ample silver shoe-buckles, and long, gold-headed cane, showed him as little changed in dress. His address had the courtly formality of the old school. It was not a mere cumbersome ceremony, because it was made up of so delicate and respectful regards to others' feelings, that, with all its manner, it seemed a simple effluence of the heart. He was altogether an excellent sample of an old-fashioned, thorough-bred gentleman.

As far advanced in life as he was, he had not lost his sympathy with the feelings of the young; and the uncommon cast of Edward's character, the beautiful propriety of his manner, and the deference which he showed to age, won so immediately upon the old man's heart, that, upon hearing from Mrs. Shirley that her son was about leaving home to try his fortune abroad, he

cried out, — "What! my friend's son turn adventurer, and I sitting at home at my ease, with nothing but my wealth to plague me! No! that must never be. If he loves the girl, he shall have her, and that without ever setting foot on shipboard; for they tell me she is worthy of him; and that is saying enough for any girl, God bless her!" — Having made up his mind, and with his heart full of the matter, with that alacrity which belongs to a vigorous old man, he left the room for the purpose of falling in with Edward.

They met at the outer door.

"You are going to walk," said Mr. Pennington. "You are rather a grave and silent companion, but as I am a talkative old gentleman, and like to be listened to, it is so much the better. Will you allow me to join you?"

"If you think me worthy to be a listener, Sir, it will give me great pleasure."

After walking a little way into a wood back of the house, Mr. Pennington began speaking of his large fortune, and his success in the management of it abroad.

"I have done with business, Mr. Shirley, and am growing so old and lazy, that half my fortune, I am afraid, will only be a trouble to me. I have been impertinent enough to seek out from your mother and sister the cause of your low spirits. I depend upon your forgiveness, by telling you I have that will cure you." — Edward coloured, and was about speaking. — "Stop!" said Mr. Pennington; "you forget your part, — you are the listener. It is I must do the talking. I have taken it into my head to do the very thing your father would have done for a child of mine had our situations been reversed: I 'm going to make you my principal heir.

But as I am growing old and might in some fond moment fall in love with my housekeeper, to make you sure, I have determined to settle an annuity upon you this very day. Hold your peace, Sir; I have not done yet. The principal creditor took the mansion-house and furniture. He has been bought out at a good bargain, and he quitted yesterday. So, everything is standing just as it did in better days. I intended that your mother should have gone back to the mansion; but as she has determined to occupy the small house near it, you have nothing to do but to start off in the morning, and take possession of the homestead. I give you joy of such a fine girl as they say Miss Aston is. There 's my hand, Mr. Shirley." Edward pressed it, and his eyes filled with tears. "Come, come," said the old gentleman, forcing a laugh; "'t is altogether a melancholy affair, I know; but then we will try to drown it in a glass of wine at dinner. The deuce is in it, if I don't make you drink with me."

He turned off suddenly down a straggling foot-path, and left Edward so surprised, that he scarcely knew whether it was joy or sorrow that so confused his senses.

"Your brother is certainly dumfounded," said Mr. Pennington, after dinner. "You and I, Harriet, have had the talking thrown upon us, as usual."

"Harriet is a good girl," said Edward, "and has done her duty, as she always does in like cases."

"You must excuse my brother, Mr. Pennington. He is melancholy at the thought of leaving us. Cheer up, Edward; you sha' n't long be left alone. We shall be after you in a few days, to take possession of our new habitation. Pray tell me, are you and Jacob to occupy the big house together, (like the Master of

Ravenswood and old Caleb,) with Peggy for housekeeper? By the by, Edward," tapping his shoulder, as she ran by him out of the room, "and before you swallow that wine, glass and all, if you chance to see Miss Aston, give her my love, and tell her we are coming, and hope to make good neighbours once more."

"A madcap, that girl," said Mr. Pennington. "Come, Mr. Shirley, one glass to your to-morrow's journey, and I am done."

At night, Edward bade his mother good-by, and prepared for his morning's journey with feelings so tumultuous that they were almost painful to him. He was stirring with the birds, and faithful Jacob being punctually at the door, he sprang lightly into the carriage.

It was a fine morning, after a shower, the sky of a clear deep blue, the piled clouds tinged by the sun. The rain-drops were falling from the trees like pearl, and the blossoms sailing gently down and scattering themselves like snow-flakes over the grass. The air was breezy and fresh, stirring the frame with sensations of delight; and the brooks ran shining on, prattling like young living things noisy with joy. But an image more beautiful, and fairer than all these, was before Edward's eyes. He saw it between the green trees, and resting upon the white clouds; its voice was in the clouds, and by the sides of the rocks. There are chosen hours when some men have a consciousness of more life than falls to others in a multitude of years. The horses swept quickly round the turnings of the road; there was a swift and constant changing of objects going on; everything upon the earth seemed in action, and he felt as if there was a spirit of motion within him, bearing him forward.

Long before sunset, they began to enter upon the scenery familiar to them. They soon came in sight of the house. It was no longer gloomy and deserted, the doors locked and shutters barred; but the windows were thrown up, and doors wide open, as if it were a holiday; and the tenants, and the domestics who had remained in the neighbourhood, could be seen pointing out to each other the carriage as it wound up the road. In a few minutes Edward sprang out into the midst of them; and there were more glad faces about him than, a week before, he could have believed were contained in the whole world. So does our state change our notions of things.

When wishing joy, and "How do ye do?" were over, old Jacob was in the full tide of narrative, making short stops now and then, — which served as reliefs to his story, — to answer the little by-questions thrown in by some impatient auditor. As soon as Edward could leave those who had come together at the house, without seeming to slight them, he stole away, that he might get ready to visit Mary.

Soon after the rich Mr. Pennington's return, there had been rumours afloat that he had bought the old estate, and then others of a visit to Mrs. Shirley; and when the occupant moved out, a day or two before Edward's arrival, the story was rife, though all matter of guess, that Mr. Pennington had made over the estate to the family. These and other rumours reached Mrs. Aston's. Mary began to think it not impossible that some of them might be partially true; then her hopes grew stronger, and with them her fears. For if accounts were true, why had she not heard from Edward? She never for a moment doubted his affection.

As she was sitting at the window, and looking

toward the road, she heard two men who were passing down the lane which led by the house, say something about old Jacob, and young Mr. Shirley's carriage. "He is come, then!" said she aloud, as she sprang from her seat and ran to the door, as if to meet him. "Who is come?" asked her mother. Mary had forgotten, at the instant, that her mother was in the room. "No one," she answered, in a sunken voice, and hurrying into the opposite room, shut the door. Mrs. Aston withdrew to her chamber. As Mary walked the room, the fluctuation of doubt and hope was torture to her. After a time she grew more composed; a light seemed to break in upon her, and hope became almost certainty.

It was about the same hour, and the evening much the same with that when Edward met Mary the first time. He remembered it as he walked towards the house; and delightful recollections, mingling with his expectations, heightened them and made them more real. Mary caught a glimpse of him through the trees, at the instant he saw her at the window. They both started back. He then hurried eagerly forward; but she was gone. He entered the house, and opening the door of the room suddenly, Mary stood before him, motionless and pale. "Mary!" he cried. The blood rushed to her cheeks at the sound; she started forward, and threw herself into his arms. There was perfect stillness. He felt her heart beat as he held her to him. Nature at last gave way; she sobbed out aloud, and in a voice broken with a wild laugh, she cried, — "Is it Edward? And is it true I am his? And are we no more to part?" — "You are indeed mine now, Mary; look at me, and make it real to me." — She raised her head, her hands resting on his shoulders; her eyes

swam with tears, but a bright joy broke through them, which came from the very soul, and her face was all tremulous with the intenseness of love. He kissed away the tear on her lid; and as he gazed upon her face, and fondly parted back the hair from her forehead, tears started in his eyes, answering to hers. It was a moment too full of feeling for words.

When they grew more calm, and Mary sat by him with her hand in his, he told her hastily what his good old relation had done for them. Mary breathed out a blessing upon him. Then turning, and looking up in Edward's face, — "To remember," said she, "how haggard and strange you seemed when we parted, and now to see you look upon me so fond and happy, — O, it makes me forget myself, in my joy for what you feel!"

In talking of the past and giving utterance to the present fulness of feeling, they forgot that the night was wearing away. "It is time for you to go," said Mary, at last. — "I know it; the thought that we are to meet to-morrow makes me, I could almost say, more than willing to part now."

As they separated half way down the walk, it was the happiest good-night they had ever bid each other.

Life now was deep and wide joy to them; all things that grew looked like sharers in a common delight, and a cheerful and sympathizing benevolence made the world appear as if there were nothing but gladness and good-will amongst men. Their souls seemed from day to day to become closer united, and to be fast making, as it were, but one being. — It was not long before Mary became the wife of Edward.

PAUL FELTON

The sick,
In my mind, are covetous of more disease.
YOUNG.

From his intellect,
And from the stillness of abstracted thought,
He asked repose.
WORDSWORTH.

And fears, and fancies, thick upon me came;
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts I knew not nor could name.
SAME.

Who thinks, and feels,
And recognizes ever and anon
The breeze of Nature stirring in his soul,
Why need such man go desperately astray,
And nurse "the dreadful appetite of death?"
SAME.

Do not torment me!
SHAKSPEARE.

Pray, and beware the foul fiend.
SAME.

PAUL FELTON was the son of a well-educated country gentleman of moderate fortune, who, having lost his wife early in life, took upon himself the education of his son and daughter, as a relief to his melancholy, and that he might not be deprived of their society.

The retired life which the father led prevented the

son's forming many acquaintances, and checked those open, communicative feelings which make schoolboys so pleasing. The serious and reserved manners which the father had fallen into, rather from his loss than from anything native to his disposition, made an early impression on the son; and from childhood Paul was retired, silent, and thoughtful. His character was of a strong cast; and not being left to its free play among equals, it worked with a force increased by its pent-up and secret action.

The people of the neighbourhood were illiterate and uncouth, having, for the most part, that rough and bold bearing which comes from a union of ignorance and independence. Paul's distant manner appeared to them like an assumption of superiority; and on any occasions which offered, they were careful to show their dislike of it. This not only increased his reserve, but gave to his mind a habit of looking on strangers as in some sort enemies; and when passing any one who was not a familiar, he felt as if there were something like mutual hostility between them. With all this he had good affections; and when looking out from his solitude upon the easy and mingling cheerfulness of some, and the strong attachments which here and there bound others together, he saw how beautiful was that which was companionable and kind in the heart of man, and his eye rested on it, and his soul longed after it.

So evil, however, is the nature of men, that almost the love of what is excellent may lead us astray, if we do not take heed to the way in which we seek it; and we may see, and understand, and wish for it, till we come to envy it in another: we may gaze upon a character that is fair, and elevated, and happy, till we

feel its very goodness stirring in us dislike. Paul had no settled ill-will towards any one, though perhaps there was mingled with his repining somewhat of envy at the happiness and ease of mind in others.

As he advanced in life, his passions waxed stronger, and he craved an object about which they might live and grow. His retired habits, however, had left him without any of that careless confidence which in so wonderful a manner helps along the man of the world; and with a consciousness of his own powers, he was distrustful of his ability to make them known, and of the estimate which others would put upon them. This same distrust ran into all his feelings; and with a character to love earnestly and tenderly, the fear that his personal appearance and somewhat awkward manners deprived him of the power of showing of what his heart was susceptible made him almost miserable at the thought that such feelings were ever given to him. — "When I am tired of solitude," he would say to himself, "and my heart aches with the void I feel, shall that which I am conscious of within me as beautiful and true be made scoff of by another, because I have not the fair form and manner of other men, and my tongue cannot so well tell what is within me? Shall all that is sincere in me be questioned, or looked on with indifference?" So far had even his good affections become a torment to him, that all was at war and in opposition in his character. At one time he was busy in scornful speculation and doubt upon his passions; and at another he would urge them on, and give them rein, that he might feel the self-torture they would bring. No one thing was left to its natural play, and as making a due part of his daily life, but existed in excess, or not at all. This change and opposi-

tion broke up that settled state in which the sense of truth puts us, and left him disturbed; till at last his mind seemed given for little else than to speculate upon his feelings, to part or unite them, or to quell them only again to inflame them.

He who so far questions his own nature will question everything, and bring the most pain and misery on those who are dearest to him, because he is for ever asking for an assurance of returned affections, and seeking that assurance in the power he can exert over the object he loves. He inflicts his tortures, and still doubts; and goes on to the end, working his own misery, and seeing the object of which he is most fond perishing, like himself, the victim of his diseased cravings.

Paul was nearly alone in the world. His father was for the most part lost in his own thoughts. His sister, though lively and talkative, had neither depth of feeling nor strength of intellect enough for him. Much action and sound to little purpose wore on his spirit; and though he was not without affection for her, a sneer would sometimes escape him in his impatience. He would shut himself up in his chamber, or, without so much as a dog for a companion, wander off where no human being was to be met with.

He had now lived several years a self-tormentor, and without communion with any one to relieve his mind, when Esther Waring, the daughter of his father's friend, came on a visit to his sister. Her disposition was cheerful and social; and she had an active, thoughtful mind, which drew and fixed the attention of those with whom she talked. Her feelings were quick and kind, and the tenor of her thinking and remarks showed that they were deep. Her black hair

fell round her dark, quiet eyes, which seemed to rest on what the mind was showing them; and when she spoke, a light shone through them from the very recesses of the soul, as the stars shoot up from the depths of the waters, brightening what they shine through. Her form was beautifully moulded; and her movements had that pliableness and delicacy which so touch and interest men of grave or melancholy natures.

Paul would often ramble among the hills, dwelling upon his own thoughts, and seeking for sympathy in nature; but she did not always answer him; and then it was that he stood like a withered thing amid her fresh and living beauty. Sometimes he would sit alone on one of the peaks in the chain of the neighbouring hills, and look out on the country beneath him, as if imploring to be taken to a share of the joy which it seemed sensible to, as it lay in the sunshine. He would call, in spirit, to the birds that passed over him, and to the stream that wound off till lost in the common brightness of the day, to stay and comfort him. They heard him not, but left him to cares, and the waste of time, and his own thoughts.

It was after one of these melancholy days that he returned home about dusk, and not having heard of the arrival of a stranger, entered the parlour with a gloomy countenance, his eyes cast down, his full, black eyebrows bent together, and his lips moving, as if he were lost in talk with himself. Without observing that there was any one in the room, he walked directly to the window, and stood looking out on the evening sky. His powerful face, and the characteristic movement of his body, attracted the attention of Esther; and her eyes fixed on him unconsciously as he stood partly turned from her. He was below the common height,

with a person of a somewhat heavy mould, square, and muscular; but he had the air and bearing of one of a deep, resolute, and thoughtful mind, — as being one of those men, whom, if a woman loves at all, she loves with the devotion of a martyr.

"Paul!" said his father. — "Sir?" answered Paul, without turning his head. — "Here is my old friend's daughter, Miss Waring."

Little used to society, and watchful lest others should mark his defects, his manner, when in company, was at all times somewhat embarrassed. He turned and saw the fair face of Esther. It was slightly flushed; and the light which filled her eyes and played over her countenance broke upon the gloomy face of Paul, and touched the sluggish spirit within him with a sensation of warmth and life. He made such apology for his inattention as his sudden introduction would allow. His manner was constrained, and a little awkward. It was, however, the constraint of that certain sensitiveness which gives more interest and pleasure than the sort of acquired, conventional ease and grace so common in society.

A country tea-table is a social affair; and Paul soon lost a little of his taciturnity. The presence of an agreeable stranger is a great restorer of the spirits to those who are but little in the world; and the mixture of the playful and the serious in Esther's conversation, and the freshness which we feel coming from a new mind, kept Paul till a late hour in the parlour. His next day's walk was somewhat shortened, and the regular tread of his step, as he paced his chamber, was not heard so long, and was often broken. It was evident that the settled gloom of the mind was from day to day breaking up, new thoughts and objects coming in,

and that which had bound the soul like ice melting and loosening, and passing off. He continued his walks more from habit than to relieve the intenseness of his thoughts; and his path lay less over the heath and sand than usual, and more among the grass, and trees, and flowers; his sense of the beautiful was becoming more wakeful, and the sternness of his nature was softening.

The change went on so gradually and secretly, that it was a long time before he was conscious that any was taking place. After breakfast, he loitered in the parlour, and his evening passed away in quiet conversation with Esther. The beautiful blending of the thoughtful and gay in her manner and remarks played on him like sun and shade on the earth, beneath a tree; and tranquillizing and gentle emotions were stealing into him unawares.

Nor was it he alone whose heart was touched. Paul was not a man whom a woman could be long with and remain indifferent to. The strength of passion and intellect so distinctly marked in his features, in the movements of the face, and in his gestures, — the deep, rich, mellow tone of his voice, with a certain mysterious seriousness over the whole, — excited a restless curiosity to get more into his character; and a woman who is at the trouble of prying into the constitution of a man's heart and mind is in great danger of falling in love with him for her pains. Esther did not make this reflection when she began; and so taken up was she in the pursuit, that she never once thought what it might end in, nor of turning back.

Paul was differently educated from the run of men; his father disliked the modern system, and so Paul's

mind was no encyclopædia, nor book of general reference. He read not over-variously, but with much care; and his reading lay back among original thinkers, and those who were almost supernaturally versed in the mysteries of the heart of man. Their clear and direct manner of uttering their thoughts had given a distinctness to his opinions, and a plain way of expressing them; and what he had to say savoured of individuality and reflection. He was a man precisely calculated to interest a woman of feeling and good sense, who had grown tired of the elegant and indefinite.

He never thought of the material world as formed on purpose to be put into a crucible; nor did he analyze it and talk upon it, as if he knew quite as much about it as He who made it. To him it was a grand and beautiful mystery, — in his better moments, a holy one. It was power, and intellect, and love, made visible, calling out the sympathies of his being, and causing him to feel the living Presence throughout the whole. Material became intellectual beauty with him; he was as a part of the great universe, and all he looked upon, or thought on, was in some way connected with his own mind and heart. The conversation of such a man, (begin where it might,) always tending homeward to the bosom, was not likely to pass from a woman like Esther, without leaving some thoughts which would be dear to her to mingle with her own, or without raising emotions which she would love to cherish.

Two minds of a musing cast will have some valued feelings and sentiments, which will soon make an intergrowth and become bound together. Where this happens in reserved minds, it goes on so secretly and

spreads so widely before it is found out, that, when at last one thought or passion is touched by some little circumstance, or word, or look, a sympathizing feeling runs through the whole; and they who had not before intimated or so much as known that they loved, find themselves in full and familiar union, with one heart and one being.

Esther's visit had now continued so long, that she was sensible it was proper for her to return home, unless urged to remain; but it so happened that she never thought of going, without at the same time thinking of Paul; and with that came a procrastinating, lingering spirit. There was always something happening, which was reason enough for her putting off the mention of the affair. She would half persuade herself that Paul had nothing to do with the delay; but her heart beat quicker, and then she would feel that she was trying to deceive herself. "There is something strangely inscrutable in him. Would I could see into that sealed-up heart!"

The hour came; but, in spite of her efforts, her voice was tremulous when she spoke of leaving for home. Paul was sitting opposite to her at the table. He looked up, and his eyes met hers. The colour came to his cheek: she blushed, and her eyes fell beneath his. Mr. Felton and his daughter protested against her going. "I hope——" said Paul at last. She looked up at him once more. He coloured deeper than before, and was silent. It stung him to the quick that any one should see the struggle of his feelings; and he left the room.

As he traversed his chamber, his step grew quicker and quicker, and, instead of gaining composure, his mind was more and more agitated. He became too

impatient to bear it any longer, and was hurrying out to find relief in the open air, when he met Esther coming from the parlour. Ashamed to let Paul see her emotion, she was passing him with her face turned from him.

"The show of concern," said Paul, without calling her by name, — Esther stopped, — "the show of concern for us, in some, may seem impertinent, and offend us more than their indifference. If I was too obtrusive just now, let me hope for your forgiveness."

"Mr. Felton officious! And can he think me so frivolous or vain a girl as not to feel any token of regard from him a cause for self-esteem?"

"I did not humble myself to extort praise, Miss Waring; it is enough if I have not offended."

"Neither did I mean it as praise. I was not so weak as to think your self-approval needed my good opinion to support it."

"Do not misunderstand me," replied Paul. "I spoke in true humility, and not in pride. Not to have offended you was all I dared look for."

"Has it ever seemed to you that any of your many notices were other than grateful to me? If so, my manner but poorly expresses what I feel. Go where I may, Mr. Felton, I shall remember how much my mind owes to you, and how much the thoughts you have given it have done for my heart. And I hope it is not in my disposition to be thankless for any good I may receive."

"Had I a claim," answered Paul, "it is not your gratitude I would ask for. The heart that longs for sympathy and finds it not, what else can touch it? Forgive me; I know not what I say. — To be remembered in kindness by you, Esther, shall be a drop to comfort this thirsty soul."

"And can a soul large as yours, and filled with all things to delight another's mind, seem desolate to you?"

"Is the mind enough to itself, think you, Esther? Or can the imagination satisfy the cravings here, at the heart?"

"The heart that does crave fellowship strongly may surely find it, if we do not perversely, and for our self-torture, shut it out."

"Yes, but it is not every passer-by that I would go with. O, she must be one so excellent, so much above me! And yet I would not take her, did she come to me in mercy only. I cannot think on't. For me there is no fellow. I must go alone, alone, through this populous earth," he said, leaving her suddenly.

As he went along, his eye passed swiftly from one object to another, seeking something to rest upon which might fix his hurrying and disordered thoughts. The notion had fully possessed him, that he was doomed to live without sympathy in the world, that the power was denied him to reveal to another what was in his heart, that his person, his manner, and all which made the outward man, barred him from a return of love; and the interest he thought Esther showed in him, while it came like an unlooked-for joy, yet brought with it doubt, humiliation, and pain. He imagined what he must seem to be to another, and then distrusted the plainness and steadiness of her nature. "There is not enough within them for their minds to dwell upon; there must be something outward and near to entertain their thoughts; and their fickleness makes them careless how poor it is, so it will but serve for the time. She will go back to the world, and, among showy and accomplished men, will smile secretly at

herself, to think that such a one as I am ever quickened a beat of her heart. — Yet it may not be so; souls may hold communion hidden and mysterious as their natures. Can looks and movements and voice like hers, so blended in harmony, speak anything but truth? Would that her heart lay open like a book to me, that I might read it and be satisfied!"

He had walked on through brake and over crumbling moss, and was climbing up the shadowy side of a steep hill, when, reaching its brow, the sweep of the western sky opened upon him in full splendour, and he seemed standing on the verge of a new world, a world of light and glory. As he looked forward, all that lay between him and it sunk away; he felt himself expanding with the air, and becoming as it were one of the sons of light. But the spirit that lifted him up for a moment passed like a bright cloud from him; a weight was on his soul heavier than the earth with all its hills; and reality breathed upon him like the air of death. As he stood on the bare hill alone, and saw all beneath him making a fair society, the trees in brotherhood, — "Must I only," he cried, "of all the works of God, be an outcast?" He looked again upon the sky; but the quiet clouds seemed to him to be telling of joy and peace to each other. He stood with folded arms, gazing on the setting sun. He spoke: — "The whole earth mourns thy going, thou gladder of all things. Thy light is poured out over it; thou touchest the trees, and the grass, and the rocks, and they each answer thee; thou fillest the air, and sounds are heard in it as if coming forth from thy very light; and all mingle in thee as in one common spirit of cheerfulness and love." — The sun was now gone. He sat himself down upon a stone, till the visionary twilight and

shadows were lost in the common darkness. There was the same vagueness of purpose in his mind as when he left home, yet there was less tumult of the passions; and gentler feelings had entered him. As he turned to go homeward, the few stars that were coming out in the east cheered his spirit; hope gushed up in his heart like returning life; the affections were in motion; and, for a while, the sense that he was in fellowship with his kind thrilled through him with rapture.

Esther was at the door when Paul returned. — "What, alone?" asked he.

"Yes, you have all deserted me."

"And can you feel deserted, Esther, who have the company of happy thoughts?"

"All thoughts, that we do not share, in time turn to sadness."

"They do indeed, or to something worse than sadness; to discontent, — almost to hate, sometimes."

"That is a fearful sin, in the solitude of our souls to grow in evil."

"It makes us mad, almost," said he, his eyes shooting a wild light on her. His look and voice made her tremble.

"Mr. Felton! what ails you? Can a heart like yours find no sympathy in all this world? Is there no being to share in its goodness with you, and give it ease?"

"And with whom shall I find rest?" he asked, looking earnestly on her. — Her eagerness had carried her too far; she blushed deeply, and stood silent before him. — The struggle with himself was a severe one; he had never laid open one deep feeling, and how could he make known that of love? At last he said, after a pause, —

"Though of manners unwinning and reserved, and seemingly cold and hard, I have at times been foolish enough to think that there was one being who could read something of my soul, and love me for what she found there. Tell me, Esther, have I been mistaken? have I presumed too much?"

"And do you ask me so doubtingly to reprove me for speaking, as I did, in the suddenness of my feelings? You cannot think that it was designed in me? I did not consider, though I should have done so, that it was a freedom ill suiting me; but it came from an earnest heart, Paul."

"My words were not those of reproof. O Esther, they were uttered in the lowliness of a soul, which, though too often restless and proud, is at times humble as a worm. It is a trial of my faith in you to believe that you could ever love me. The world could hardly have persuaded me once, that a creature like you, made almost to be worshipped of men, could ever look in fondness on one like me." He paused for a moment; then his manner changed suddenly. "But, so much as I doubt my powers to touch another's heart, so much the more, so much the more must I have assurance of her love."

"Why so wild, Paul? What pledge can I give you that I would not give?"

"Ay, ay, but the pledge must not only be a sure one: it must be of a love which shall make me all in all. Can you," he cried, seizing her hand and wringing it hard, "can you have me in all your thoughts, — make your whole soul mine?"

She shook, and turned pale. She struggled to pass it off lightly; but a tear was in her eye, as she said, with a forced smile, — "Why, Paul, you are beside

yourself! Anybody might think I was making myself over to the Evil One, and not to the man that loves me."

"Forgive me, forgive me, Esther!" he murmured, putting his arm round her, and resting his hot brow on her shoulder. "I, — I feel myself sometimes too poor a thing for mortal regard; and then, — and then I could crawl into the earth. O, take me to you, and cherish me, and tell me that I am not wholly worthless, — that you will love me!"

"Paul, Paul, this is madness. You have brooded all alone over your melancholy thoughts, till they have bewildered you. If you care for me, shall I not make you happy? Look up, and let a cheerful spirit enter you."

He lifted his head slowly from her shoulder, and stood gazing on her beautiful, tremulous countenance. "O, you are an angel come in mercy to me! My spirit will never suffer so more."

"This is too eager, Paul," said she, kindly. "Let your spirit have rest, and try to be of a calmer mind." And he was quiet. The tossing of the soul settled away, and he stood with a spirit gentle as the moonlight which poured over them, as it came up in the east. For what spirit will not a woman's kindness calm?

At last Esther's father came to take her home. Paul was urged by him to join them; but a certain over-delicacy, some might call it, prevented his going for the first time to the house in company with the woman to whom he had been but a little while engaged; and so, with an embarrassed and half-uttered apology, he said he should soon follow them.

He had time for only a word or two at her leaving

him; and yet he looked and spoke as if it would take ages to pour out what was in him. All the good affections in our nature seemed at work there. It was love and pity, an almost parental care, and the heart-sickness of parting. As he put his arm gently round her, and looked in her face, there was in his manner more of the father, who is about parting with an only daughter for the first time, than of the lover. His voice was low, thrilling, and admonitory.

"You are going from me, Esther, for the first time since we have met. A single and near object moves our affections strangely. In a little while you will be among those with whom you grew up; and old sympathies of thought and feeling may return to you. Look carefully into your heart, Esther, and think it your best faith to me to abide by what that tells you."

"And can you regard and love me, Paul, and yet judge me of so light and changeable a disposition?"

"No, Esther; but the very intenseness of love calls up misgivings; and better I were left out on the bleak heath yonder, than be gathered to your bosom to be thrown away again."

They parted; and though Esther loved him with a devoted spirit, she breathed more freely when out of his presence. He was dearer to her for his melancholy; and his kind and fond manner, when his abstraction of mind was gone, touched her heart. Yet there was something ominous to her in his gloom; and though she knew it had been caused by long solitude and a mistaken estimate of the relation in which he might stand to others, still it was mysteriously foreboding to her, and there was an indistinct impression on the mind that some dreadful event, connected with it, awaited her.

As they drove from the door, he followed with his eyes the daintily moving steeds and gay chariot, till a turn in the road shut them out from his sight. "These things belong to what we call the elegances of life," said he to himself. "There is much going under that term which serves to break up the thoughtfulness of the mind, and what is native and sincere in the heart." He turned away, not only melancholy, but dissatisfied and doubting. And now that he was alone again, and without the kind persuasions of Esther, his old depression and gloom were returning, and with them the tortures that doubting minds undergo in love. Sometimes he saw her before him with the distinctness almost of a real presence, her voice and countenance beautifully touched with her fondness for him; and then again he remembered her cheerful, social spirit, and he thought himself driven from her mind by those who were strangers to him. A thousand times a day he would ask himself, "Is she thinking of me now? or is she busy amid the millions of things which waste our time, and draw to them our wishes and hopes, yet have nothing abiding in them like the nature of our souls?"

These conjectures and sad reflections were now to give way to feelings immediate, active, and intense; for Paul set off from home, and soon reached Mr. Waring's.

Unless a man has met, after a long or distant separation, the woman who loves him with all her heart, he never has seen the soul shine out in the countenance in all its glow and beauty. So thought Paul when they met. And as Esther looked on him, his face, too, was changed like the edge of a cloud by the shining of the sun upon it; and she felt that no joy is like her joy who reads such silent tokens of love returned, heart

answering to heart, and thanks for the deep gladness she has given.

The house of Esther's father, whither Paul had come, was situated but a few miles from the city, in a pleasant village, made up chiefly of people of wealth and fashion. Though Mr. Waring's fortune was not so large as many of his neighbours', as he had no child but Esther he was able to gratify his fondness for company and gay life, and had made these agreeable to her from early habit. She loved society the better, also, because she made it pleasant, and not for the reason that those do who are as dull company to others as to themselves.

The consequence of this was, that Paul and she had fewer hours together than when at his father's. He was shy of being near her in company; and to talk before strangers with the woman to whom he was known to be engaged would have been martyrdom to him. He had found that her countenance brightened and spirits rose high in society. Her gay laugh and cheerful voice were, in some states of his feelings, like the hissing of an adder in his ear. He was pained and made uneasy, because he saw her taken up with that in which he felt himself unfitted to hold a part. She was giving delight and receiving it in return, and he could not share in it. He would stand aside and watch her, till he fancied that her look and tone of voice were the same with which she looked and talked with him.

His mind was in a peculiar degree single. Whatever passion or thought was in him, it filled him entirely; and now that it was love, all in the world that held not connection with that was as nothing to him. He neither heard, nor saw, nor felt anything that concerned not his love for Esther. The alacrity with which she

entered into whatever was going on was to him a want of steadiness of mind and depth of feeling. He understood nothing of those to whom the passion of love gives a gay spirit, — a feeling of kindness and fellowship toward all the world, — from whom, as it grows fuller and more intense, it sends forth something of its bright influence over all around. In him it was a self-absorbing and lonely fire, flaring only through the recesses of his own soul, and shining alone upon his own solitary thoughts.

"And has God given them another constitution of mind, also?" said he to himself, one night, as he left the house, too restless to stay any longer. "Have they no fastnesses nor places of rest to come home to? Day and night are they on the wing, and never tire. The bird that passed over me just now, and called to me out of the darkness, though he make himself companion of the stars the night long, will go to his nest by morning. I would not be a thing to lay my heart open to the common eye. Its beatings warm me the more, to think that I can be in the midst of men and they not count its pulses. Rather than lie out for ever sunning in the day, I would be covered up in my grave." Paul could not accuse Esther to himself, without a feeling of compunction. This did not drive away his doubts, but made him turn some of the impatience he felt upon her. Yet, in the midst of it, the truth of her character would break out upon him in its fair simplicity, and his adoring spirit would look up to her as something set apart and sacred.

Her spirits were in full flow when Paul quitted the house, for it gave animation and cheerfulness to her in all she did when she thought him near her. The conversation began to flag; she turned to look for him,

but he was gone. She remembered that a feeling like depression had been gradually gaining on her; and a superstitious thought crossed her, that she had been mysteriously conscious of missing something, she knew not what, though she had not before perceived that he had left the room. She grew silent; the company gradually withdrew; the family retired to rest, and she was left alone.

It was midnight, and Paul had not returned. There was no sound in the house. She raised the window and looked out. It was a black, misty night, and there was that intense stillness abroad, which, at such a time, is felt by us as a supernatural presence, and makes us think of death. She scarcely breathed as she listened for his footstep, and the beatings of her heart struck audibly upon her ear. At last she heard him as he came round the house, and the blood bounded through her frame. "Paul!" she cried, and her silver voice rang in the still air. Paul entered.

"Where have you been, you runaway," said she, springing lightly toward him, "to give me the heart-ache for two long hours, — and all in the chill night-fog, too? See," said she, running her fingers playfully through his straight, black hair, on which the dampness stood in drops; "these pearls shall all be mine, and make me a happy girl again."

"They will not be the first pearls that have eased a woman's heart, Esther. — Come, come, these are no brown curls to ring the white fingers of a fair hand."

"I thought to cheer you; I am sorry it offends you."

"Did I speak harshly? If I did, it was far from what I feel."

"Not harshly, but mournfully, and as if I had given

you cause; and to think so is harder to bear than what comes from an over-hasty temper."

"I am glad to hear you say so, for that is one of the many tokens whereby we find out love."

"And are you in search of mine still? I had thought it had been yours long ago."

"And I think so too, Esther; but then it can rest only on our belief; and upon that there will always be hanging some ugly shred of doubt."

"O, I had believed it was a faith, — not to speak profanely, — a faith that surpasseth knowledge, — that it was in us as our consciousness, our very life. Is it folly in me to think so?"

"No, Esther, it is your virtue. Bad as I am, I have moments of such blessedness. And this, this is one of them. It is on me now!" he cried, in a broken laugh. She started from him as from a deranged man. — "Be not alarmed," said he, seizing her arm, and looking on her eagerly, "I am not mad, not quite mad, though joy shoots through me sometimes like fire."

"I wish it might burn in you gently and constantly, Paul, for then I should see you a happy man; and I would die to-night, and e'en forego all my love for you, — if love must die with us, — could I but leave you happy." She covered her face, and sobbed as if comfort had forsaken her.

"O Esther, I am not worthy this; I 'm so poor a thing, I ought not to make you unhappy even. That was an evil time in which you saw me first. When I was alone, I went about the earth as a doomed creature; and now that I am connected with my kind, the curse that was on me singly seems to be stretching out over all in communion with me. When I see you happy, my heart aches for you, to

think how heedless you are of the hour that is awaiting you."

"And what hour have I to fear, Paul, but the hour of death, which is to part us?"

"I cannot tell; only I have lived impressed from the time I was a boy, that it was writ I should be miserable. And when I see you happy, you look to me like a star trailing your glory across my gloom, only to fall and go out in it. Better, I fear, that I should have lived on in darkness, than that your light should ever have shone on me. — O, I talk! No more of this now; the morning will overtake us. You look pale and heart-sunken. Let me not make your hour of rest miserable, Esther. Think this, as I hope it is, but the boding of midnight. To-morrow I 'll be as cheerful as the lightest of them. Sweet sleep comfort you! And now, my love, good night." — Esther looked at him, melancholy, yet something cheered, but she could not speak as they parted.

For several days Paul's affectionate manner was not broken by any sudden starts, or gloomy reserve; and if after a time these returned upon him, it was seldomer; and his disposition seemed softened and quieted. The day was coming that Esther was to be his wife; and as it drew near, he felt more surely how deeply rooted she was in his heart.

There are, at times, a tenderness and a delicacy about a serious man, the beauty of which affects us even more than when we see them in a woman. This is partly from contrast. They are in agreement with a woman's person and general character, and are habitual to her. It may be that when the man is under their influences he has a more exquisite sense of them, — may we say, a finer touch for them?

Though Paul showed the greatest fondness for Esther, except at moments when haunted by some fearful passion or thought, there was now so kind a regard, so delicate a propriety of the affections, in his manner toward her, that she almost thought some new and higher sense of his love had been given her; it moved her to tears. Paul was happy that it did; it made her the nearer to him. He knew that the tender affections have more or less of melancholy in them, and that his own were tinged by it.

"Let me fasten on these bracelets," said he, taking out a pair he had just purchased; "for there is a charm in their circles to bind you to me."

"Nay, nay, Paul; no manacles, though to bind me to you even," she said, unclasping one of them, and twirling it round her finger. — "Don't look so serious about it. — There, clasp it again, and you shall be the first to take it off, though thou wouldst have me spell-bound, thou wizard man. I wish it had been something else, though."

"And what would you have had it, Esther."

"This," said she, passing her hand playfully over his face.

"What, a face like mine, and 'in little,' and set round with gold and diamonds! And where would you have worn it? — Why, it would have made your heart beat with fear to have such a looking thing so near it. And to have made love to it," he said, half smiling, "that 's past all faith!"

"Then there is no truth in my love, Paul."

"Yes, but there is; it is all truth. And yet," he added, as if pondering upon it, "it is very strange."

"What is strange?"

"That Esther should ever look on me, and, after,

love me. And yet you will vow it to-morrow, will you not?"

"If you question it so, it may be better for us both that I should not. For when I have done it, should Paul doubt, he had better be in his grave than live."

"Nor should I deserve to see the light, nor feel this blessed sun. I was moody, Esther. Do not lay to heart what I say at such times. My joy was too much for me, and made me play with sorrow. Didst never in grief have a wild and horrid mirth fork like lightning by you? I have, that my eyes have blenched at it. I shall be used to this joy soon; and then my spirit will be as quiet before you as that cloud resting above us in the light yonder. O, you shall be my sun and all else that is good and cheering to me; and when I hold you to me thus, to-morrow, I 'll not call you Esther, but my wife."

The next day they were married, and Paul took Esther to their new home, not quite a mile from the village. The house was plain, but well proportioned, set down in the middle of a level grass-plot, which was broken only by the gravel-way winding up to the door, and by a clump of young trees a little on one side. The whole was open to the sun, and about it was an air of simplicity and quiet. All along the even road to the village lay a beautiful prospect, and there was a row of elms and sycamores, stretching the length of the route; so that, though they had but one near neighbour, Mr. Ridgley, they had quite as much company as if in the midst of the village.

Their house terminated these pleasant views; for a little back of it ran a ridge of steep rocks, and beyond that the country was desolate, stretching out into wide sand tracts broken by patches of scant, yellowish

grass; and half round the whole swept a forest of low, ragged pines. The place was difficult of access, and appeared like a land accursed; neither the foot-print of man nor beast was to be seen there. It was one of those good-for-nothing tracts of country which are sure to lead their proprietors into lawsuits. A farmer in the neighbourhood had put a couple of men on it to cut down the wood; and this business he carried on for some time, till, falling into a dispute with a neighbouring farmer, notice of the trespass reached the owner, who would not have remembered that the estate was his, had it not been for his tax-bills. A suit was instituted, the farmer at last driven off from what was not worth having, and the true proprietor ruined. A story was current thereabouts, that the land was good enough before the owner gained his cause, but that he was a hard man, that the devil had a hand in the suit, helped him to gain it, and then danced over the land, where now lay the sand, and singed the grass as he went off in fire and smoke. The men said they did not know why they should go where there was nothing to be got; and a foolhardy boy, who had once been a bird-nesting there, was ever afterwards looked on with suspicion, as, in some way or other, belonging to the Evil One.

When Paul now looked back, and remembered that till a little while before the world had been bare of joy to him, that the soul, living without sympathy, had been at prey upon itself, and that a solitude, more dreadful than if he had stood the only living thing upon the earth, had surrounded him, — the solitude and void which estrangement from others makes about us, — it was as if he had passed into another state of being; and a new nature and new delights filled him with

sensations of which before he had no thought. He looked upon Esther, and his mind was one rapture. Neglected and passed by as he had been, she had stopped, and spoken comfort to him, and taken him by the hand; and he had followed her like a child. "Thou hast been my good angel to me, Esther," he said in thought, "and brought me out of darkness into the comfortable light. The spring of my feelings was sealed up, but you have opened it, and it runs on now, taking the hues and forms of all the beautiful and blessed things with which God has filled this earth for us. My heart is fuller of joy than I well know how to bear, — it aches to speak it to you; and yet its throbbings can tell you better than words can."

This was the over-contentment of a mind melancholy by nature, and not knowing how to measure its joys when they came. The happiness of such minds is always in excess; then it seems strange to them; they question its truth; it does not belong to them; they fear it cannot last; they look back upon their melancholy as their true condition, as one which they are bound to by some fatality; and in their hopelessness they rush into it farther than before.

Paul's state was so opposite to what he had been wonted to, that it seemed to produce some indistinctness of the thoughts and senses, and he could hardly have a clear persuasion of the reality of his happiness. It partook of the visionary; and he began to fear that his hopes and imagination had cheated him into it. In his saner moments, when he could not question its truth, he doubted its stability; and a vague notion that this was to pass away, and something, he knew not what, to take its place, unsettled the quiet of his mind and disturbed its full content. A feeling, like those

ill forebodings which sometimes come over us and then go off again, was more and more gaining possession of him, bringing back his old melancholy, troubling his reason, and distorting what he saw.

There is an infatuation in gloomy minds, which makes whatever they are concerned in minister to their melancholy; and they seek out causes of depression with an industry more eager and unrelaxed than that with which cheerful souls hunt after pleasure. It is the craving of a diseased appetite, never sated.

Paul felt his melancholy returning at intervals. At first, he shrunk from it with the dread that the lunatic flies his fits of coming madness; but at last, as dark thoughts began to gather round him, he no longer tried to scatter them; the fate that he imagined himself born to, and his former distrust of himself, were oftener in his mind; and with these came his doubts of others. — "It cannot be that I was made to be loved of one so beautiful and of so light a heart. The gloom that shadowed me about was a mystery to her, and she was curious to know it. She saw that I was depressed and miserable, and that moved her heart to pity me; she found that her kindness touched me and made me happy, and this stirred an innocent pride within her, and she mistook it all for love. And, fool! fool! so did I. Ay, and there was no one near to place this uncomely form by; and no gay, accomplished, and ready mind to play round the sluggish, unchanging movements of mine. Poor girl, she knew not me, nor herself, then; but the knowledge will one day be revealed to her, and with a curse as heavy as fell on man in paradise."

Though Paul passed many such hours when alone, and was restless and impatient in company, yet the thought that Esther was his wife was still a healing to

his heart. He loved her with all that intenseness his nature was formed to feel; and it was with a joyous adoration that he looked on her in his undisturbed moments. He could yet feel the reality of her fondness for him; and he thought of it as more than an earthly blessing.

It was about this time that Frank Ridgley returned home, after an absence of two or three years. He had been an early and ardent lover of Esther. She had a great regard and liking for Frank, but not a particle of love for him. His case was a more hopeless one than if he had been her aversion; for opposite passions run so into each other, particularly in women, that it is oftentimes hard to tell which is which. Perhaps Frank felt the truth of this (though he was not much in the way of philosophizing) when Esther refused him, telling him, at the same time, that she had a great esteem for him. For the matter of that, thought he, though he dared not say it, you might profess as much to my grandmother. He was angry and mortified, and in despair; and confounded, and not knowing what feeling he was suffering under, swore most solemnly that he would never survive his disappointment. — "That 's an unwise resolution in you, Frank," said Esther. "Only allow yourself time to think about it till you are a little older, and you will live to see the folly of it. — Forgive me, Frank; I do not mean to make sport of your feelings; but, for the life of me, I cannot help thinking how bright and well you will look a twelvemonth hence."

The truth is, Frank was one of those whose feelings spend themselves on the outer man, and whose passions, violently as they seem agitated, are but healthful excitement, compared with what those feel who look clayey and hard when they are most moved. Esther

knew very well that he was sincerely and warmly attached to her at the time, and that, would she consent to have him, he would make a fond husband, and wear black for her a full year after she was gone; but that his mind was not one of those abiding-places in which we find decayed, gray trees, and young shoots, running vines, and mosses, and all those close and binding growths which look so lasting, faithful, and affectionate. She pitied him as we do one who has a twinge of the toothache, — which nobody dies of. However bent we may be upon dying of crossed love, it is no easy matter; next to starving one's self to death, there is nothing which requires more resolution and perseverance. Accordingly, Frank returned in due time, glad to see his friends, with his head full of novelties, with much useful information, and a lively way of showing it.

It was a damp, uncomfortable evening, and Paul and Esther were round the fire; Paul a little on one side, and partly in the shade, now and then making some short, serious remark, after his usual manner, with his eyes resting on Esther's countenance, as she sat looking into the fire, pondering on what he said and the many things it led the mind to. Her face was thoughtful, and her features had a beautiful distinctness, as they appeared in strong outline against the warm fire-light that shone on her. At no time had love seemed to Paul so quiet and domestic. He thought that he had never before been conscious how lovely and dear to us humanity may be.

There was a smart rap at the door, and in came, in full spirits, Frank Ridgley. Esther, who was surprised and sincerely glad to see him, showed it in her benevolent countenance. His manner was a little embarrassed; for he had not forgotten that he had once been in

love, though now cured of it; and remembering Esther's prophecy, he coloured, and looked not a little ashamed to think that she should see him alive and well again. Paul felt something like uneasiness at the expression of Esther's face, and an impatient doubt passed through his mind as he observed Frank's embarrassed manner. It was that old distrust of himself and of his power to interest another deeply, making him question the possibility of a sincere and enduring passion for him, which haunted him, rather than a proneness to think lightly of another's virtue. Frank was a man much below Paul in force of character, and feeling, and intellectual power; yet he was his very opposite in mind and person; and this left Paul room to harass himself with surmises, and torture himself with the pain with which humbling thoughts afflict proud men.

"Mr. Felton," said Esther, a little agitated at introducing her husband to an old friend, "this is an old acquaintance of mine, Mr. Ridgley." His eye fastened on Esther, as if he was reading her very soul. He saw her agitation, but mistook the cause. He rose slowly from his chair, out of the dark corner in which he was sitting, and giving his hand deliberately to Frank, and looking downward, said gravely, "Sir, I am happy to see you." — As the light struck upon his figure, and he took Frank's hand, Frank shrunk back a little, as if not altogether safe. The deep and scarcely audible voice in which he spoke, his dark countenance, and low, muscular form, seemed possessed of some strange power. Frank involuntarily turned toward Esther, as if in wonder that anything so gentle, and fair, and cheerful as she could belong to such a being. Esther trembled as she observed Paul, though she hardly knew why, and

seeing Frank looking at her, blushed deeply, for she knew what was passing in his mind. Paul glanced his eye swiftly over both of them, and, bowing, drew back into his seat.

The room was lighted, and Frank, who was of too cheerful a disposition to be made long uneasy by unpleasant thoughts, began, in full spirits, to talk about old times, and what he had seen since leaving home. His gayety was not of that sort which we sit and look at with a good-natured acquiescence, and are pleased to see so well played off; but it was communicative, driving away our troubles, and making us feel, for the time, as if we ourselves, too, were of the same happy temperament. He was a man of good sense, also, and of right honest and kind feelings, and therefore much better fitted for the true purposes of travel than those who go equipped with everything that can be thought of, except straight heads and honest hearts. His gayety and humour were mingled with just observations, and softened down by the propriety and delicacy natural to his character; and these, with a graceful and elegant person and handsome countenance, and a certain deference of manner, made him a favourite wherever he went, particularly among the women.

Notwithstanding the effect Paul's appearance had on him, he knew Esther too well to think that any attention he might pay her would reconcile her to a neglect of her husband. This might be one of her singularities; but it was not to be disregarded. Besides, however reserved and silent Paul might be, no one could sit near him and forget who was by his side. Though Paul was distant and cold at first, the ease and propriety of Frank's remarks were not unobserved by him, and he was gradually led to take part in the conversa-

tion. When he did, Frank no longer wondered at his power over Esther; though, at the same time, (he knew not why,) he was conscious of something like uneasiness and distrust on her account. Yet, on the whole, the evening passed off very well; and Esther's heart was lightened to think it had ended so much better than it began.

When Frank withdrew, Paul became silent. "It is not yet quite two years since she first saw me," said he to himself; "and who can tell how many times since she was a child, to that hour, she has sighed as she thought on some other man?" He stirred in his chair. Esther looked at him; but he was buried in thought. "And is it mere chance that has fixed her love at last on me? Have the same hopes and same desires which rest on me been breathed forth in silence for another when I was unknown? And had she never seen me, might she not have looked as fondly on some other man, and hung on him as she will now on me?" It was hateful to him to think on it. There is no man of sentiment who would not gladly be rid of such thoughts if he could; he practises upon himself to believe it was not so, and though half conscious of the self-deception, yet even from that little gathers some relief. But Paul was made for self-torture; besides, he had lived a lonely man so long, that what he felt was not to be so shuffled off. He considered with himself, and considered truly, that there is not one woman in a thousand who has not, at some time or other, imagined herself in love with another man than him she at last marries. It made him writhe with impatience.

At last Esther said aloud, but without raising her eyes from a print of Moreland's on which she was looking, "He is certainly very amiable."

"Do you mean that swine-feeder?" asked Paul, sarcastically, as he looked up.

"I was not then thinking of him or his pigs," she replied, smiling.

"You should be more definite, then, my dear. You forget that every one's thoughts do not take the same road with yours. Yes, he is one of the handsomest men I have met with, and of a very winning address."

"Handsome, did I say?"

"I know not that you did; yet you think him so, surely, — do you not?"

"Certainly I do; but I was speaking of his heart."

"O, of his heart. Of that you know more than I."

"And well I may, Paul, for I have known Frank Ridgley from a boy."

"Very like," said Paul; then spoke of the weather and soon left the room.

He at this time believed Esther to be of a mind as open as the day, yet because his own person and bearing had nothing graceful or attractive in it, he made these properties of too much importance, forgetting how much less women regard such things in us, than we do in them. He remembered Frank's appearance; and the suspicion took possession of him, that there must have been a time when he had place in her youthful imagination. This was a poisonous thought to take root in a mind like his.

The next day, as he was returning home from a morning walk, he saw at a distance Frank leaving the house. "I thought as much,—a lady's man, who plays his glove and shows a white hand. We value ourselves, and are valued, on the turn of a finger-nail; and, what is worse, our sober, retired thoughts are put

out o' doors, and our minds fitted up for shows and *gala-days*."

Frank soon came along, looking fresh as the morning, and, as he passed Paul, wished him gayly a pleasant day. Paul bowed his head slowly, and walked on homeward.

"And what have you there?" asked Esther, going toward him as he entered the room.

"Constancy, Esther, constancy."

"Give it me, then," said she, catching it out of his hand. "Yet I 'll not take it all. There, it shall be between us. Stay, let me have it again, and I 'll plant it under this window, that it may grow all together. And I 'll water it daily."

"Look well to it, lest a blight take it."

"It is not so tender that it need watching so, surely?"

"Yes, but it is, Esther, — it is often blasted."

"I read not so of it."

"Then your books are a lie; do not trust them."

"I will not, or myself either. It is yours again; and you shall tend it. I am too heedless and gay for such continual care. Come, lay by that sombre countenance, and fit you with a more cheerful look, for we are to have a splendid ball at the village. Frank has been here, and spoiled my morning with talk of figures and dresses. And I know not but that you would have found me in full practice, had I not protested against dancing at high noon. — Now, take me not in earnest, Paul."

"Would that I could tell when I might, Esther. My heart is ill at ease, and I cannot trifle now."

"And is it I who have broken its peace?" asked she, as she leaned fondly on him. "It was my hope,

and all which made me happy, that I should be its rest and joy. I seem to you too much a trifler for your graver nature. I, too, was graver than now, before I knew you, Paul. It is the over-joy that you have filled my heart with which makes me so prattling and wild, like a child. It is that I feel too much, and not too little. Yet sometimes it makes me thoughtful, nearly to melancholy, instead of gay. I wish it always did, for then I should be like you, and content you better. And you would never then cast on me that look of sorrow and reproof which you did just now, would you, Paul?" The tears started to her eyes.

"Be like me, Esther! You little know what you are wishing for. Be like yourself," said he, laying his hand on her open brow; "be good and be happy. Misery is but another name for sin, for imperfect virtue. Could we cast off our frailties, man might walk through the afflictions, the losses, and wrongs of life with the calm of heaven within him, and its glory round about him. I have had visions of it; and they have changed this vile thing you lean on to the bright soul and shape of angels."

She gazed on him without breathing. His face was turned upward, and he seemed as if seeing into the world above him. His look was fixed and calm as the sky. He stood for a time as if rapt in holy converse. By and by a cloud passed, his countenance became dark, and his head sunk on his bosom. Esther could look no longer. Paul seemed sinking beneath her weight. She raised herself, and he turned, and walked slowly out of the room. She would have followed him, but she could not move.

He took a path which led through the fields back of the house, and wound among the steep rocks part way

up the range of high hills, till it reached a small locust-grove, where it ended. He began climbing a ridge near him, and, reaching the top of it, beheld all around him a scene desolate and broken as the ocean. It looked, for miles, as if one immense gray rock had been heaved up and shattered by an earthquake. Here and there might be seen shooting out of the clefts old trees, like masts at sea. It was as if the sea in a storm had become suddenly fixed, with all its ships upon it. The sun shone glaring and hot on it, but there was neither life, nor motion, nor sound. The spirit of Desolation had gone over it, and it had become the place of death. His heart sank within him and something like a superstitious dread entered him. He tried to rouse himself and look about with a composed mind. It was in vain; he felt as if some dread, unseen power stood near him. He would have spoken, but he dared not in such a place.

To shake this off, he began clambering over one ridge after another, till, passing cautiously round a beetling rock, a sharp cry from out it shot through him. Every small jut and precipice sent it back with a satanic taunt; and the crowd of hollows and points seemed for the instant alive with fiends. Paul's blood ran cold, and he scarcely breathed as he waited for their cry again; but all was still. Though his mind was of a superstitious cast, he had fortitude; and, ashamed of his weakness, he reached forward, and stooping down, looked into the cavity. He started as his eye fell on the object within it. — "Who and what are you? Come out, and let me see whether you are man or devil." And out crawled a miserable boy, looking as if shrunk up with fear and famine. "Speak, and tell me who you are, and what you do here." The

poor fellow's jaws moved and quivered, but he could not utter a sound. His spare frame shook, and his knees knocked against each other as in an ague fit. Paul looked at him for a moment. His loose, shambly frame was nearly fleshless; his light, sunburnt hair hung long and straight round his thin jaws and white eyes, that shone with a delirious glare, as if his mind had been terrour-struck. There was a sickly, beseeching smile about his mouth. His skin, between the freckles, was as white as a leper's, and his teeth long and yellow. He looked like one who had witnessed the destruction about him, and was the only living thing spared, to make death seem more horrible. — "Who put you here to starve?" said Paul to him.

"Nobody, Sir."

"Why did you come, then?"

"I can't help it; I must come."

"Must! And why must you?" — The boy looked round timidly, and, crouching near Paul, said, in a tremulous, low voice, his eyes glancing fearfully through the chasm, — "'T is He, 't is He that makes me!"

Paul turned suddenly round, and saw before him, for the first time, the deserted tract of pine wood and sand which has been described. — "Who and where is he?" asked Paul, impatiently, expecting to see some one.

"There, there, in the wood yonder," answered the boy, crouching still lower, and pointing with his finger, whilst his hand shook as if palsied.

"I see nothing but these pines. What possesses you? Why do you shudder so, and look so pale? Do you take the shadows of the trees for devils?"

"Don't speak of them. They 'll be on me, if you talk of them here," whispered the boy, eagerly. Drops

of sweat stood on his brow from the agony of terrour he was in. As Paul looked at the lad, he felt something like fear creeping over him. He turned his eyes involuntarily to the wood again. — "If we must not talk here," said he, at last, "come along with me, and tell me what all this means." The boy rose, and followed close to Paul.

"Is it the devil you have seen, that you shake so?"

"You have named him I never must. I have seen strange sights, and heard sounds whispered close to my ears, so full of spite, and so dreadful, I dared not look round lest I should see some awful face at mine. I 've thought I felt it touch me sometimes."

"And what wicked thing have you done, that they should haunt you so?"

"O, Sir, I was a foolhardy boy. Two years ago I was not afraid of anything. Nobody dared go into that wood, or even so much as over the rocks, to look at it, after what happened there." — "I 've heard a foolish story," said Paul. — "So once, Sir, the thought took me that I would go there a bird-nesting, and bring home the eggs and show to the men. And it would never out of my mind after, though I began to wish I had n't thought any such thing. Every night when I went to bed, I would lie and say to myself, 'To-morrow is the day for me to go.' And I did not like to be alone in the dark, and wanted some one with me to touch me when I had bad dreams. And when I waked in the morning, I felt as if something dreadful was coming upon me before night. Well, every day, I don't know how it was, I found myself near this ridge; and each time I went farther and farther up it, though I grew more and more frightened. And when I had gone as far as I dared, I was afraid to wait, but

would turn and make away so fast, that many a time I fell down some of these places, and got lamed and bruised. The boys began to think something; and would whisper each other and look at me, and when they found that I saw them, they would turn away. It grew hard for me to make one at their games, though once I used to be the first chosen in. I can't tell how it was, but all this only made me go on; and as the boys kept out of the way, I began to feel as if I must do what I had thought of, and as if there was somebody, I could n't think who, that was to have me, and make me do what he pleased. So it went on, Sir, day after day," continued the lad, in a weak, timid tone, but comforted at finding one to tell his story to, "till at last I reached as far as the hollow where you just now frighted me so, when I heard you near me. I did n't run off, as I used to from the other places, but sat down under the rock. Then I looked out and saw the trees. I tried to get up and run home, but I could n't; I was afraid to come out and go round the corner of the rock. I tried to look another way, but my eyes seemed fastened on the trees; I could n't take 'em off. At last I thought something told me it was time for me to go on. I got up."

Here poor Abel shook so, that he seized hold of Paul's arm to help him. Paul recoiled, as if an unclean creature touched him. The boy shrank back.

"Go on," said Paul, recovering himself. The boy took comfort from the sound of another's voice.

"I went a little way down the hollow, Sir, as if drawn along. Then I came to a steep place. I put my legs over to let myself down; but my knees grew so weak I dared not trust myself. I tried to draw them up, but the strength was all gone out of them, and

then my feet were as heavy as if they were lead. I gave a screech; and there was a yell close to me and for miles round that nigh stunned me. I can't say how, but the last thing I knew was my leaping along the rocks, while there was nothing but flames of fire shooting all round me. It was scarce mid-day when I left home; and when I came to myself under these locusts, it was growing dark."

"Sit down here awhile," said Paul, looking at the boy as at some mysterious being, "and tell out your story."

Glad at having company, the boy sat down upon the grass, and went on with his tale.—"I crawled home as well as I could, and got into bed. When I was falling asleep, I had the same feeling I had when sitting over the rock. I dared not lie in bed any longer; for I could n't keep awake while there. Glad was I when the day broke, and I saw a neighbour open his door and come out. I was not well all day; and I tried to think myself more ill than I was, because I somehow thought that then I need n't go to the wood. But the next day He was not to be put off; and I went, though I cried and prayed all the way that I might not be made to go. But I could not stop till I had got over the hill and reached the sand round the wood. When I put my foot on it, all the joints in me jerked as if they would not hold together, so that I cried out with the pain. When I came under the trees, there was a deep sound, and great shadows were all round me. My hair stood on end, and my eyes kept glimmering; yet I could n't go back. I went on till I found a crow's nest. I climbed the tree and took out the eggs. The old crow kept flying round and round me. As soon as I felt the eggs in my hand and my work done,

I dropped from the tree and ran for the hollow. I can't tell how it was, but it seemed to me I did n't gain a foot of ground: it was just as if the whole wood went with me. Then I thought He had me his. The ground began to bend and the trees to move. At last I was nigh blind. I struck against one tree and another till I fell to the ground. How long I lay there I can't tell; but when I came to, I was on the sand, the sun blazing hot upon me, and my skin scorched up. I was so stiff, and ached so, I could hardly stand upright. I did n't feel or think anything after this, and hardly knew where I was, till somebody came and touched me, and asked me whether I was walking in my sleep; and I looked up and found myself close home.

"The boys began to gather round me, as if I were something strange; and when I looked at them they would move back from me. — 'What have you been doing, Abel?' one of them asked me, at last. — 'No good, I warrant you,' answered another who stood back of me. And when I turned round to speak to him, he drew behind the others, as if afraid I should harm him: and I was too weak and frightened to hurt a fly. — 'See his hands; they are stained all over!' 'And there 's a crow's egg, as I 'm alive!' said another. 'And the crow is the devil's bird, Tom, is n't it?' asked a little boy. 'O Abel, you 've been to that wood, and made yourself over to Him!' — They moved off, one after another, every now and then turning round and looking at me as if I were cursed. After this they would not speak to me, or come nigh me. I heard people talking, and saw them going about, but not one of them all could I speak to, or get to come near me. It was dreadful, being so alone! I met a

boy that used to be with me all day long; and I begged him not to go off from me so, and to stop, if it were only for a moment. 'You played with me once,' said I; 'and won't you so much as look at me, or ask me how I am, when I am so weak and ill?' He began to hang back a little, and I thought, from his face, that he pitied me. I could have cried for joy; and was going up to him, but he turned away. I called out after him, telling him that I would not so much as touch him with my finger, or come any nigher to him, if he would only stop and speak one word to me; but he went away shaking his head, and muttering something, I hardly knew what, how that I did not belong to them, but was the Evil One's now. I sat down on a stone and cried, and wished I was dead; for I could n't help it, though it was wicked in me to do so."

"And is there no one who will notice you, or speak to you? Do you live so alone now?" It made Paul's heart ache to look down upon the pining, forlorn creature before him.

"Not a soul," whined out the boy. "My grandmother is dead now; and only the gentlefolks give me anything; for they don't seem afraid of me, though they look as if they did n't like me, and wanted me gone. All I can, I get to eat in the woods, and I beg out of the village. But I dare not go far, because I don't know when He will want me. But I am not alone; He 's with me day and night. As I go along the street in the daytime I feel Him near me, though I can't see Him; and it is as if He were speaking to me; and yet I don't hear any words. He makes me follow Him to that wood; and I have to sit the whole day where you found me. I dare not complain; and I am afraid to

stir till I feel He will let me go. I 've looked at the pines, sometimes, till I have seen spirits moving all through them. O, 't is an awful place! They breathe cold upon me when He makes me go there."

" Poor wretch!" said Paul.

" I 'm weak and hungry; yet when I try to eat, something chokes me; — I don't love what I eat."

" Come along with me, and you shall have something to nourish and warm you; for you are pale, and shiver and look cold here in the very sun.

The boy looked up at Paul, and the tears rolled down his cheeks at hearing one speak so kindly to him. He got up, and followed meekly after to the house.

Paul, seeing a servant in the yard, ordered the boy something to eat. The man cast his eye upon Abel, and then looked at Paul as if he had not understood him. — " I spoke distinctly enough," said Paul. " And don't you see that the boy is nigh starved?" — The man gave a mysterious look at both of them, and with a shake of his head, as he turned away, went to do as he was bid.

" What means the fellow?" said Paul to himself, as he entered the house. " Does he take me to be bound to Satan too? Yet there may be bonds upon the soul, though we know it not; and evil spirits at work within us of whom we little dream. Are there no beings but those seen of mortal eye, or felt by mortal touch? Are there not passing in and around this piece of moving mould, in which the spirit is pent up, those whom it hears not? those whom it has no finer sense whereby to commune with? Are all the instant joys that come and go, we know not whence or whither, but creations of the mind? Or are they not, rather, bright

and heavenly messengers, whom, when this spirit is set free, it will see in all their beauty, — whose sweet sounds it will then drink in? — Yes, it is, it is so; and all around us is populous with beings now invisible to us as this circling air."

So fully had such thoughts absorbed Paul's mind, that when, upon entering the room, he met Esther and her father, he started as if the sight of flesh and blood were new to him. At dinner he seemed but half conscious of what was before him; his look and manner were abstracted; and when he replied to any remark, his answers were abrupt and from the purpose.

"You are a good deal of a dreamer, I know," said Mr. Waring at last; "but I think I never saw you less awake to what is homely and substantial in this world we live in."

"*They* sleep, and *their* eyes are sealed, who do not look beyond it," said Paul.

The old gentleman looked at Esther; but her eyes were fixed on her husband, who did not observe it, for his were cast down. Her heart beat with uneasy sensations, and uncertain thoughts troubled her. She tried to command herself; and as soon as she could, she spoke to him in an affectionate, cheerful voice. He looked suddenly up at her with a fond gaze, as if an angel had spoken to him out of a cloud. — "Ah," said she, "have I called you back to earth again?"

"Scarce to earth," he said, his suffused eyes resting on her beautiful face. — He had quite forgotten that any one was by, till the old gentleman spoke. The blood went quick to his cheek.

"What, so long married, and a lover yet?" cried Mr. Waring. "I thought love would have become a dearer sort of friendship ere this."

"I doubt," answered Paul, glad to turn the affair into a speculation, "I doubt whether, in certain minds, love ever so changes its nature. It is a part of their constitution, and endures as long as they do; at least, I think so; though I cannot tell what old age and gray hairs may do toward a change. It is the only thing that has made me recoil from the thought of being old."

"And what would you make of a pair of married lovers of threescore?"

"I like not thinking of it," he said, with a fitful expression of pain. "I would rather part soul and body, than lose long-cherished and dear thoughts. Nor do I believe they will be lost. Those who are made ready for a happy state hereafter must rest their chief hopes and pleasures, even in their attachments here, on that which is fitted to live for ever. The corruption of humanity that is now about us will drop off, but essentially, I trust, our feelings and joys will remain the same. What makes my soul's chief earthly happiness would be my misery, did I not believe it eternal, like the soul itself. To die will be but the full opening of this same mind, with all its good affections, (which no more than bud here,) to the light and the sweet air of heaven. Is what we tread on here truth, and our imaginations a lie? I would believe that these high and gladdening conceptions are not all a cheat, but that they will one day open in glory on our cleared and delighted vision. What is beautiful and true here, though it perish for a season, will put forth again in more perfect beauty in the morning light of that sun which shall never go down. — Pardon my warmth, Sir," said he, suddenly checking himself.

"Then," said Mr. Waring, "you think that not a

little of the after existence of the happy will be made up of the same affections that possess us here, purified, exalted, and influenced, no doubt, you mean, by a constant and a fuller love, and a clearer knowledge of God."

"Much so, Sir. The same affections, conforming themselves to a change of state and circumstances. But that love of God hereafter of which you speak, that consciousness of Him, must be the principle of life in them here, too, or they will live only in time, by and by to rot."

"Has not your religion too much to do with the senses?"

"I think not. — As if sin had not set us far enough off from God and the spiritual, we give to all that relates to these an abstract character, and then put our faculties upon the stretch to reach to some realizing apprehension of them; we make God a sort of universal intelligence, take for mere metaphor those terms in which He speaks of his affections as so like our own, and then try after a love of Him; we destroy impersonation, as if it were an easier thing to fasten our affections upon an abstract principle, and thus war against one of the strongest propensities of our nature, and the manifestations of Himself in the outward world, and the pervading character, the leading facts and declarations of His written Revelation. We have not learned that the main distinction between us, the created, and Him, the Creator, is that between sin and holiness, finite and infinite; and we shall awake in utter amaze in the other world, to find how little we differ from Him in kind, though infinitely in degree. In short, shall we not awake 'in his likeness'? Though God, as it were, lifts up the small flower at our feet, and

asks us to look on it, and see how He cares for every little thing, and hath pleasure in its beauty, — nay, though He has done more than this, and has come very nigh to us, taking upon Him our own nature, — yet, through the fatuity of sin, we persist in making Him a God afar off. We do not, if I may so speak, humanize our religion enough; and thus we deprive ourselves of much assured rest and strong heart-comfort. We have burned our idols of wood, and broken our idols of stone, and now worship an *Idea*. Though our God has come to us standing between these two extremes, it may be said of us, as was said by Saint John of those of old, 'There standeth one among you whom ye know not'; and so long as we know not Him, we cannot know ourselves, or understand that unity of duality in our own natures, the Divine-Human; we cannot learn the meaning of the first words spoken concerning us in the Book of God, — 'Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness.'

"You may perhaps, Sir, think me presumptuous, in reasoning about that of which we know so little; though, if I deceive not myself, it is a reasoning which comes of a sense of humble and willing dependence, and not of self-dependent pride. But I began with simply saying what were my hopes and wishes, and what gave me here that which seemed to me like a foretaste of joys hereafter, and had at times persuaded me that what I felt was not a vain imagination. I cannot so separate the natures of the mind and senses, as some would do. There is not an earthly beauty I look upon that has not something spiritual in it to me. And when my mind is fair and open, and soul right, there is not a flower I see that does not move my heart to feel towards it as a child of God. What is,

to my mind, is a type of what shall be; and my own being and soul seem to me as if linked with it to eternity. I know that to many this is mere folly, and that even to those of highest reach it is but vague; for what more can we have while here than intimations and dim semblances of eternity? Yet, to question it because he knows no more, a man might as well deny he has a heart; for he will find that growing the more a mystery, the deeper he ponders it. We think of angels as having shapes and voices; and if the unbelieving would say that the Writ is false, how came the mind of man, from the beginning, to conceive of such things as true? Is that connected with our highest faith, and what seems inborn in the mind, a lie?"

Paul became silent; and he was filled with happier and calmer emotions than he had known for a long time. Esther observed his tranquillity, and for a while she was blessed with the belief that it would be lasting. She knew that such thoughts were not strangers to him; but she had seen them before only when they came and went swiftly, lifting him suddenly and wildly out of horrour and despair to a rapturous height, then leaving him to sink deeper than ever. When dark thoughts and passions seized him, they seemed to her more like outward powers which drove him whither they would, than like things springing from his own mind and heart. There was a mystery about them that made her fear when they took him, and her heart bled with pity for him.

There are souls who have hours of bright and holy aspirations, when they feel as if nothing of earth or sin could touch them more; but in the midst of their clear and joyous calm they feel some dark and frightful passion, like an ugly devil, beginning to stir within them.

Their minds try to fly from it, but, as if it saw its hour, it seizes on its prey with a fanged hold, and there is no escape. Perhaps there are no minds, of the highest intellectual order, that have not known moments when they would have fled from thoughts and sensations which they felt to be like visitants from hell.

Paul's mind was of this structure; and so long and violently had he suffered under such influences, that his natural superstition, heightened by them, had almost persuaded him his passions were good or evil spirits which had power to bless or curse him. The story and the appearance of poor Abel haunted him. He called it insanity in Abel; but he could not shake off the feeling, that the miserable wretch was the victim of a demon. He began to tremble for himself; and when he felt his passions in motion, the thought that they were powers it was in vain to struggle against almost drove him mad.

The night for the ball at last came, and Esther's spirits rose as the hour drew nigh. She had left home but little for a good while past; and though her love for Paul was almost devotion, and there was a peculiar sentiment and delicacy in his little attentions to her and the fondness he showed her, yet an undefined awe, a dread of the happening of something evil, oppressed her daily more and more, and any change seemed to be the lifting of a weight from the heart to let it beat freely again. Her mind and senses were peculiarly sensitive and exquisitely alive to enjoyment, and her heart seemed to be in whatever she said or did. When Paul was happy, he dwelt on this with a delight that cannot be told; but when a gloom hung on his mind, and he saw her eloquent, impassioned face and earnest gestures, he remembered how deceitful and prone to

ill are the best hearts, how soon the warmed passions may turn from good to evil, and he hardly dared look on what he indistinctly dreaded.

Esther came bounding towards Paul with a step as light as if she needed only air to tread on. "Rouse you, dreamer," said she, playfully jogging him; "we are late. Look up, and vow to me that I was never half so beautiful before."

"O, that I can vow to you from day to day; for you grow in beauty on me, as you grow closer and closer to my heart."

"What an angelic creature I shall seem to you at fifty, then! How lucky for me that I am yours; for who else would praise my beauty when I am turned of two-score?"

"Be not too sure, Esther; my eyes may be shut to all beauty before that time comes. Then you may find others to praise it in you, — if you will believe them."

"Not of death now, Paul, — not of death now! — Come, let us be going. We have lived here in this stillness so long, that the sound of pipe and tabor will stir my blood like a new-come Greenland summer."

"It is at a full and quick beat now, if I feel it right," said he, holding her by the wrist; "a little faster might do you harm."

"Beat it slow or fast, Paul, there's not a drop of it courses through the heart, that is not warm to me with a love for you. Think you I profess too much?"

"No, not too much."

"Why, then, look you so sad upon it?"

"To remember that I cannot always think so."

"And why not always? Do you hold me of so unstable a nature?"

"Ask me not what I cannot answer you. It is not myself," he cried; "They haunt me. I cannot scape them. — Away, away, I 'm not your prey yet!" He walked the room violently, his clasped hands pressing down upon his head, as if his brain would burst with its working. His eyes were set, and his teeth ground against each other. He stopped, and his frame loosened from its tenseness. "'T is over!" he sighed out, spreading his arms wide, as if just set free.

Esther shook with fear as she stood fixed, gazing at him. When the change to quiet came on, she went to him. "Paul, my husband, come to me; tell me what terrible thoughts they are that tear you so."

"Thoughts, call you them? Visions, shadows, horrible, horrible shadows! Speak not of them; call them not round me again. O Esther, I am sore afflicted; I would I might not suffer so. Pray for my soul's peace, Esther. It longs, it longs to rest quietly in its love for you. Put your arms round me. There! there!"

"If they would keep you thus, I would shelter you day and night, Paul, and look and think on nothing but you."

"Even here I am not safe; there 's no place of refuge for the hunted soul."

"Above there is, Paul, if we but reach upward."

"I've striven in agony to reach it; but when they will, these horrours, that have no name, pluck me down! — But come, they 've left me now, and the bosom 's free again." He held her at arm's length, and stood gazing on her. "And could dark, terrible thoughts shake me so before all this light and beauty? Why, Esther, I feel, by you, like a cast-out angel by the side of one who had stood faithful. I've held you

too long. Your father waits for you; go, and forget my madness."

"Not without you, Paul."

"What, I! No, in faith! A married pair go regularly coupled at the hour set! No, no, I 'm not such a rustic as you take me for."

"Do not so suddenly trifle in this way, Paul; it grieves me more than all; it is not your disposition."

"In earnest, then, the blood heaves too violently through me yet; when it flows quietly I 'll come to you."

He pressed her hand gently as he put her into the carriage, and gave her one of those smiles which always went like sunshine to Esther's heart. He saw her look back after him as the carriage turned down the road, and stretched his arms out towards her as if to clasp her to him. As he raised his hands upward, "O Heaven," he said, "thou hast given her to me as more than an earthly blessing; let it not prove a curse upon my soul!" He felt something clasp his knees; and, looking down, sprang as from the coil of a serpent. "Were you sent to snare me now, you imp of hell? How crawled you here, and for what?"

"I watched for you under this thorn," whined out poor Abel; "for I shall die if I cannot see you and speak to you. And when you prayed, I came up to you to have you pray for me, that I might be spared going, if 't were only for this one night."

"I 've sins and tortures of my own enough. Pray for yourself, wretch."

"I dare not, I dare not," cried Abel, "lest He come and torment me. O, help me! You were good to me once."

"And what mortal might can shield you against unearthly powers?"

"I feel safer when near you, though you make me tremble. Not a soul beside will so much as hear me when I call after them. I've thought that perhaps nobody but you *could* hear me any more."

"And why I? — Don't put your lean hand on me!"

Abel shrunk back. The loathing that Paul felt turned to pity. "Come, you are hungry, and must have something to strengthen you." He took the boy into the house; and, having seen him fed, gave him an old rug to lie upon. "Sleep there, Abel; you shall not to the wood to-night." Abel felt comforted and protected for the first time since the thought of the wood entered his head. In a few minutes he was in a sound sleep.

Paul took his way along the greensward to the village. As he passed the bush under which Abel had been sitting, he involuntarily moved a little aside from it. — "Why has that boy fastened so on me? I like it not. There will no good come of it. When he is near me, I feel him as one who is cursed and bringing a curse. The powers of darkness put him between me and mine, and promptings of dreadful portent are whispering in my ear." His mind grew more disturbed as he went forward ruminating on these things, till, having nearly reached the end of his walk, he stopped under a large tree, that he might gain sufficient composure and a clear brow to enter the room.

Not a leaf moved, and the stars were shining on in silence. Suddenly the music burst forth from the hall: to Paul it was like a crash that jarred the still universe. "'T is hateful to me; — noise, and folly, and hot, hot

blood! Warm hands, and flushed cheeks, and high-beating bosoms! And she who an hour ago would have sheltered Paul and looked and thought on none but him, — no more to her now than if he had never been, or had slept a twelvemonth in his grave! These creatures are beautiful and fair, and would be innocent as flowers, did none but heaven's winds visit them; but the world's breath blows on them, and they are tainted, tainted! Beings all of sensations; and, so, love is grateful to them. But it roots not deep and silently as in man, from whom to pluck it out tears up heart and all. — Leave me, leave me, let me not think on 't!" He hurried forward, as if to fly from the thought.

Scarcely considering whither he was going, he was soon before the folding-doors of the hall. Coming out of the quiet and the dim light, the flare of the lamps, the whirl and confused motions, and the Babel sounds of a ball-room, breaking suddenly upon him, blinded and confused him. He pressed his brow, to recover himself a little, and then entered the room.

One who is unused to such scenes is hardly able, at first, to tell his familiar acquaintances. Paul was in anxious search of one, as he passed round the room close to the wall. He had just gone by her without perceiving her, when a well-known laugh, though a little louder than usual, made him stop. As he turned, Esther sprang forward in the dance as if on air. The bright smile of pleasure was on her face, as she gave Frank her hand; and as they bounded swiftly by Paul, without observing him, he saw the warm glow upon her cheek, her eyes turned a little upward, suffused and sparkling, her dark floating curls rising, then just touching her snowy forehead, then lifted with the motion

again, her bosom tinged with a delicate tint, and moving with a fluttering beat. — "Heaven and hell!" said he to himself, "ye work side by side in this world, though with opposite intent." Every nerve in his body seemed to shoot and burn with electric fire. The sensation passed off, and left a weak, sick feeling, so that he could scarcely stand. A damp stood on his pale brow and trembling hands. He drew behind a couple of gentlemen, who were talking together while looking on the dance, and leaned against the wall. For a time he dared not look up; nor did he hear any sound till the conversation of the gentlemen suddenly drew his attention.

"What an exquisite figure, and how pliable and graceful!" remarked one. "Every limb is full of life."

"Yes," said the other; "and how sinuous the motions! They run into each other like the swells of the sea. O, she 's a very Perdita in the dance. — Before he went away Frank was an elegant looking fellow, and travel has improved him wonderfully. I would bet my head on 't, that she is sighing this moment at thinking she said him nay, or had not waited to see him what he is now, that she might to-night unsay it again."

"Then she is a betrothed damsel, ha? Poor girl, that she should be in such haste! I warrant you, this dancing partnership will put thoughts into her head which a lover would hardly like finding there. It will be well for her, by and by, if she does not talk in her sleep."

"If she can't teach her tongue silence at such a time, it is a gone case with her already, for she was married long ago."

"And what gallant knight won her? He must keep

watch and ward, for, in faith, I've half a mind to make off with her myself, could I bring her to it."

"No hard matter that, if report speaks her lord truly. 'T is a sort of Vulcan and Venus match, I am told, and that he looks as black as if just out of a smithy, and is glum, and says nothing. By all accounts, they are dead opposites, both in mind and body. She will be on the wing all night, I vouch for it, and make up for the last month's caging."

"Poor girl, I pity her. But how could she find it in her heart to refuse Ridgley? I should have thought that, for a man like him, once asking would have been enough anywhere."

"Why, lord, she no more meant it, than she did to die a maid. The blockhead might have known she was a coquette, as every one else did, and that she was but teasing him. One, with half an eye, might have seen what a favourite he was with her. Why, she would have gone to church barefoot rather than not have had him. The fool took her in earnest and went upon his travels, and she married to vex him. Silly things! Unless she wears the widow's stole, they may pine their hearts out now, — or else the stars must wink at it. But come away; I'll look no longer, lest I covet my neighbour's wife." — And off they moved, arm in arm, casting their eyes back upon Esther as they went.

Each word they uttered entered Paul's soul. His brain felt tightened, like sinews, with the dreadful thoughts that rose in his mind; and the misgivings and surmises of his doubting and gloomy spirit, on which, till now, he scarcely dared send a glance, were turned to certainties; and he fastened on them as if under the working of a charm. He pressed with his

back against the wall, his eyes as fixed as if crowds of spectres were rising up before him; and his hair stood on end, as if life were in it. Those near him observed his strange appearance, and drew slowly back, looking at him and then at each other in silence, as in wonder and fear at what they saw. He took no notice of what was passing, but seemed to be gazing on something terrible which none saw but he. The dancing had stopped, and a mysterious silence spread like a shadow over that part of the room. Esther spoke in a clear, gay tone to some one by her. The sound struck his ear; he started forward, his eyes still fixed on the floor. — "Ha! are ye there?" he muttered. — Presently a change seemed taking place in him, and he looked round, as if asking where he was.

Mr. Waring, who observed that something unusual had happened, went that way, and found Paul standing alone, his eyes wandering, his body trembling, his lips white, and the sweat standing in big drops on his broad, pale forehead. Seizing Paul by the arm, as he called him by name, and shaking him to rouse him, Paul started, giving the old gentleman a look of amazement. — "What mean ye, what 's the matter, that you handle me thus? Ha, ha! — I did not know you, old man. Your daughter 's fair and honest, is she not? And loves her husband truly, ah, truly, does she not? for she herself told him so."

"This pent atmosphere has overcome him," cried Mr. Waring; "he 's unused to it." And he turned Paul, to lead him into the open air. Paul looked at him, as if to ask what he was doing, and then suffered himself to be led out of the room. He took, without seeming conscious of it, what Mr. Waring gave him; and they walked to an outer door.

"This night air is cold," said Paul, shuddering.

"Cold?" asked the old gentleman, surprised. He felt of Paul's hand and forehead; it was like touching the dead.

"You are ill, quite ill, Mr. Felton; you must go home. Let me find Esther."

"I've found her out before you, old man. — Stay," said he, in an eager whisper, seizing Mr. Waring by the arm, and looking close in his face; "the net's nigh set which is to catch that bird; don't scare her."

"This will never do; you must go home with me, then. Your state is worse than you are aware."

"No, in faith, it is not," said Paul, bitterly. "It was; but I know the worst now. — Let us to the room; the fit's over, and I'm well again."

"Not well, I fear," said Mr Waring.

"Yes, quite well, mind and body both," replied Paul, drawing himself up; "and I'm calm, quite calm." He turned, and leaving the old gentleman at the door, walked into the room as composedly as if nothing had happened. Those who had seen him supposed that the close, hot air had oppressed his brain, and thought nothing more of the matter. Mr. Waring remembered his mysterious words, and was alarmed; for he had some little insight into the structure of Paul's mind.

Esther, who had heard nothing of what had passed, had mingled with the crowd at a distant part of the room; but Paul soon discovered where she was; for she was carrying on a lively conversation with those round her. He drew near enough to hear her happy voice, and the clever, good-natured bandying of words. Other thoughts and feelings filled his soul. He stood amid the light and rattle like some black, solid body,

that nothing penetrated. Mysterious shapes, which told him in part of something dreadful, were wandering through his mind with a fearful, shadow-like stillness; the scene directly before him seemed set off at an undefined distance; and his lonely spirit held its own musings, known to none of earth.

"Can we love," said he to himself, "and one be sad, and yet no secret sympathy tell the other of it? Were Esther cast down, though I saw her not, the spirits that are about us, and know what is in our hearts, would whisper it to me. — Idiot! boy! Talk I of love? Is not her heart another's? Ere I knew her, it was his. In mind, — in mind she 's his now, — at this instant, his." — He moved quickly from the place he was in; and taking his stand just outside the circle, and opposite Esther, stood watching her, without being seen. Frank was by her side, playing with her fan. — "What, so constant!" said Paul to himself. "Could neither seas nor travel cure you? But I have that that will. Yet ye 're a faithful pair; and it would break two loving hearts. No, no, I 'll not be cruel. — Why talk I of you, ye coxcomb? — What are you to me? 'T is she! 't is she! and I 'll see what 's in that heart, though I tear it from her."

"And where is Mr. Felton to-night, that he is not with us?" asked one. — "O, at home, no doubt," answered a peevish maiden. "He loves no plays, as thou dost, Antony," said she, maliciously, looking first at Frank and then at Esther. Esther could not but observe her significant manner; and innocent as her heart was of all improper thoughts, she felt pained and embarrassed. Paul watched the changes of her countenance. — "And is her name so stale already? Do they tell her to her very teeth that she 's a ——?" — There

was a short pause. Esther was looking beyond the circle to relieve herself of the sight of those immediately about her, when her eyes suddenly met those of Paul, which were fixed on her with a deadly look. She started back with a shriek. There was a general alarm, and Paul pressed in toward her. "What's the matter? What was it?" cried they all at once. "I know not," said Esther, trying to recover herself. "'T was a — a spider! — some horrid creature on me!"

"Ugly things!" sharply whispered Paul to her, as he half supported her, — "that lie hid in corners, with meshes spread for silly flies. Beware, for they draw the blood, and leave their prey hanging for the common eye." Esther shuddered at his words, as she heard his breath come hard from suppressed passion. She nearly sank to the floor, confounded, mortified, and afraid. Never had Paul looked on her so before. She had seen hate, and revenge, and triumph, in his eye. Then, lest those about her should suppose the consciousness of detected, guilty thoughts had overcome her, — it was more than she could bear. "I 'm ill. Take me away," she cried, in an imploring tone. Frank came eagerly forward. "Not you, not you!" she said, impatiently, waving him back, while Paul supported her in his arms, his eyes resting on her pale, sorrowful countenance.

"Where 's my child?" cried her father, rushing forward, as Paul was bearing her to their carriage.

"Safe with her husband," answered Paul, in a firm, but gentle voice. The old gentleman looked up at him, and saw tears in his large, dark eyes. Taking out his cloak, Paul wrapped it carefully about Esther, and placed her in the carriage.

"Will you go with us, Sir?" said Paul, respectfully.

Mr. Waring put his foot upon the step "I had better not," thought he, and drew back. Esther observed her father's hesitation, and putting out her hand to him, said, with a forced smile, "I shall be quite well presently. Good night, Sir."

She sat silent as they drove homeward. She had not half surmised the character of Paul's thoughts. It was humbling enough to her that her husband should have heard such insinuations against her, and should have looked as if some impropriety or trifling in her conduct had laid her open to the slants of the malignant. "He it is that was insulted," thought she; "and it is I who subjected him to it, and left no way of revenge to his proud spirit." She looked timidly at him. He was leaning bareheaded out of the carriage window. There was no longer any anger in his countenance; but it told of heart-sickness and of pity for the faults of those we love. "Paul," she said; but could not go on. He appeared not to notice her, but, after a while, asked, — still looking on the trees playing in the breeze and moonshine, — "What were you about saying, Esther?"

"Nothing, nothing, only that I fear the change to this damp air may be dangerous to you."

"Never fear that; there's a fever here," said he, striking his forehead rapidly with his fingers, "that must be cooled quickly, or 't will sear the brain up."

They drove on, Paul sitting as before. "Have ye no sense of your glad motions?" said he, as he still looked out on the trees. "Can ye be so innocent and look so gay, and yet feel no joy? Sure, ye have your delights unto you, and the morning sun shall take you in them fresher than when he left you. Blessed creations of a kind Father, ye know not sin or sorrow;

but man lies down and rises to them both." — Esther could bear this no longer. "My husband," she sobbed out, as she sank upon his bosom, "O, take me to you, and bless me with them; for I, too, am innocent, though not as pure as they are." — He folded her in his arms as tenderly as a father would a lost child returned, and she felt a tear drop on her forehead.

"You need rest, my love," said he, kindly, as he led her into the house. She turned and looked at him.

"There is no rest for me, Paul, when I have broken yours, though I never meant it."

"The whirlwind is gone over. You see me calm, now."

"Calm and fond, but not happy, Paul. I never thought to live to grieve you."

"Our griefs are mostly of our own creation, Esther; and so may mine be. I 'll call myself to count for them, while you go sleep. To-morrow all will be well. Good night."

"'Innocent, though not as pure as they are'? Said she not so? As yet she has sinned in mind only. — Body and soul not both bound over to hell yet. Conscience, or fear, I know not which, — both? — holds her still. Did she not wave him back, as if she dared not trust herself? And speaks not that conceived guilt? And did they not twit her of it? All of them to hear it, and I, her husband, standing by! And when she saw me, O, shame! She confessed it all, all. — Down, down, ye thoughts, that rise like fiends within me, — tempt me not, — drive me not mad!" He rushed wildly from the room, as if pursued by spectres.

As he hurried through the passage to his study, his foot caught in the rug on which Abel was sleeping.

He started back, as if the powers of darkness had crossed him. "Have ye snared me, then? Is there no way left me?" Abel lay with his limbs drawn up, and the muscles of his face distorted as by some sharp pain. Every now and then his mouth drew convulsively, and he uttered broken, weak cries, as if dreaming that some one was tormenting him. As Paul looked on his shrunken body and ghastly face, it seemed like the carcass of a wretch who had pined to death, and into which some imp had entered as his place of sin and torment. "Sent to make me a victim cursed and abhorred as yourself! I see it all, and yet you cling to me; and I cannot shake you off!" He raised his lamp to get a more distinct view of the object before him. The light flashed upon Abel. As he opened his eyes on Paul, he gave a shrill cry, hiding his face in his hands. "Not yet, not yet!" begged he, twisting himself round till on his knees. "One more day before you take me with you! The deed's not done yet; I cannot go till that's — that's done!"

"And has the soul's working so changed my visage that he does not know me? Is my fate fresh writ with a mark like Cain's upon me? — Rouse up! Whom do you take me for?" — At the sound of Paul's voice, Abel curled down upon the floor.

"I thought He had come for me; for They've told me He would come; and yet it could not be now; for They have been whispering me all night long that I must do it before I went."

"It? — What?" asked Paul, impetuously. "Art mad?"

"I cannot tell you, Sir; I don't know. It is something dreadful, that I'm afraid to do; and yet I must. And then, then I'm lost!"

"And quickly, for you 're about it now, though you know it not. You 're here, — within me. Dare you look on him you 're blasting?"

"I 'm gone! I 'm gone!" shrieked Abel, clinging to Paul's feet. "Help me, save me!" — A loathing hate entered Paul. His teeth set, and his foot drew up, as if he would have crushed the boy. Abel's hold relaxed, and he lay panting and exhausted. Paul watched him till his breathing became freer. — "Up, and follow me. I 'll know the worst that waits me."

Violent passions and dreadful thoughts had now obtained such a mastery over Paul, that they came and went like powers independent of his will; and he felt himself as a creature lying at their mercy. He prayed to them to spare him, as if they had been beings that could enter him, and move about him, and torment him, as they would. They took shadowy forms and wild motions, becoming dimly visible to his mind's eye. — "If I 'm lost," cried he, as he left the house, "if ye have made me a child of hell, speak to me and tell me of it. If cursed deeds must be done of me, whip me not blind and bound to my work, but let me know it all, and what I am, that I may put my heart into the act, and share your devilish triumph."

Paul pressed on so fast, that Abel, with his shambling gait, could hardly keep up with him. The eastern horizon was shut in; and when they came in sight of the rocky ridge, the moon, which was just setting, threw its light over the multitude of its grayish broken points, giving to its whole length the white lustre of the milky-way.

"It seems the path of heaven," said Paul to himself, as his eye glanced over it, "but it tends not thither. The whole earth 's a cheat, and I! — I 'm its dupe.

Yet I 'll be fooled no longer. — Yes; and they take angels' shapes. — She that looks as if made to be an inhabitant of the pure, sacred stars, why she, — she that looks all innocence in her sleep, — for then they feign too, — whom and what dreams she of now? And she 'll wake presently, and talk to her pillow, and call it soothingly by his name, and fold it in her arms, as she does me, me, — and fancy it him. — Tell me, tell me, you that haunt me, is it not so? Can you not give me to look into her very soul, and see its secret workings, as ye see mine?" — Abel trembled from head to foot as he watched Paul's motions, and heard his terrific voice without understanding what it was he spoke of.

The moon was down and the sky had become overcast when they began to wind among the rocks. Though Paul's walks had lain of late in this direction, he was not enough acquainted with the passage to find his way through it in the dark. Abel, who had traversed it often in the night, alone and in terrour, now took heart at having some one with him at such an hour, and offered, hesitatingly, to lead. — "The boy winds round these crags with the speed and ease of a stream," said Paul. — "Not so fast, Abel."

"Take hold of the root which shoots out over your head, Sir, for 't is ticklish work getting along just here. — Do you feel it, Sir?"

"I have hold," said Paul.

"Let yourself gently down by it, Sir. You need n't be a bit afraid, for 't will not give way; man could n't have fastened it stronger."

This was the first time Abel had felt his power, or had been of consequence to any one, since the boys had turned him out from their games; and it gave

him a momentary activity, and an unsettled sort of spirit, which he had never known since then. He had been shunned and abhorred; and he believed himself the victim of some demoniac Power. To have another in this fearful bondage with him, as Paul had intimated, was a relief from his dreadful solitariness in his terrours and sufferings. — "And he said that it was I who was to work a curse on him," muttered Abel. "It cannot be, surely, that such a thing as I am can harm a man like him!" — And though Abel remembered Paul's kindness, and that this was to seal his own doom too, yet it stirred the spirit of pride within him. — "What are you muttering to yourself, there, in the dark, or whom talk you with, you withered wretch?" — Abel shook in every joint at the sound of Paul's harsh voice.

"It is so dreadfully still here," said Abel, "I hear nothing but your steps behind me; and they make me start." — This was true; for notwithstanding his touch of instant pride, his terrours, and his fear of Paul, were as great as ever.

"Speak louder, then," said Paul, "or hold your peace. I like not your muttering; it bodes no good."

"It may bring a curse to you, worse than that on me, if a worse can be," said Abel to himself; "but who can help it?"

Day broke before they cleared the ridge; a drizzling rain came on; and the wind, beginning to rise, drove through the clefts in the rocks, with sharp, whistling sounds, which seemed to come from malignant spirits of the air.

They had scarcely entered the wood, when the storm became furious; and the trees, swaying and beating with their branches against one another, seemed pos-

sessed of a supernatural madness, and engaged in wild conflict, as if there were life and passion in them; and their broken, decayed arms groaned like things in torment. The terrour of these sights and sounds was too much for poor Abel; it nearly crazed him; and he set up a shriek that pierced through the noises of the storm. It startled Paul; and when he looked at him, the boy's face was of a ghostly whiteness. The rain had drenched him to the skin; his clothes clung to his lean body, that shook as if it would come apart; his eyes flew wildly, and his teeth chattered against each other. The fears and torture of his mind gave something unearthly to his look, that made Paul start back. "Abel, — boy, — fiend, — speak! What has seized you?"

"They told me so! I've done it! I led the way for you! They're coming, they're coming! We're lost!"

"Peace, fool!" said Paul, trying to shake off the power he felt Abel gaining over him, "and find us a shelter if you can."

"There's only the hut," said Abel, "and I would n't go into that if it rained fire."

"And why not?"

"I once felt that it was for me to go, and I went so near as to see in at the door. And I saw something in the hut, — it was not a man, for it flitted by the opening just like a shadow; and I heard two muttering something to one another; it was n't like other sounds; for as soon as I heard it, it made me stop my ears. I could n't stay any longer, and I ran till I cleared the wood. — O, 't is His biding-place, when He comes to the wood!"

"And is it of His own building?" asked Paul, sarcastically.

"No," answered Abel; "'t was built by the two wood-cutters; and one of them came to a bloody end; and they say the other died the same night, foaming at the mouth like one possessed. — There it is," said he, almost breathless, as he crouched down, and pointed at the hut under the trees. — "Do not go, Sir," he said, catching hold of the skirts of Paul's coat; "I 've never dared go nigher since." — "Let loose, boy!" cried Paul, striking Abel's hand from his coat; "I 'll not be fooled with." — Abel, alarmed at being left alone, crawled after Paul, as far as he dared go; then, taking hold of him once more, made a supplicating motion to him to stop; he was afraid to speak. Paul pushed on without regarding him.

The hut stood on the edge of a sand-bank that was kept up by a large pine, whose roots and fibres, lying partly bare, looked like some giant spider that had half buried himself in the sand. On the right of the hut was a patch of broken ground, in which were still standing a few straggling, dried stalks of Indian corn; and from two dead trees hung knotted pieces of broken line, which had formerly served for a clothes-line. The hut was built of half-trimmed trunks of trees laid on each other, crossing at the four corners, and running out at unequal lengths, the chinks partly filled in with sods and moss. The door, which lay on the floor, was of twisted boughs; and the roof, of the same, was caved in, and but partly kept out the sun and rain.

As Paul drew near the entrance, he stopped, though the wind just then came in a heavy gust, and the rain fell like a flood. It was not a dread of what he might see within; but it seemed to him that there was a spell round him, drawing him nearer and nearer to its

centre; and he felt the hand of an invisible power upon him. As he stepped into the hut, a chill ran over him, and his eyes shut involuntarily. Abel watched him eagerly; and as he saw him enter, tossed his arms wildly, shouting, "Gone, gone! They 'll have me, too, — they 're coming, they 're coming!" — and threw himself on his face, to the ground.

Driven from home by his maddening passions, a perverse satisfaction in self-torture had taken possession of Paul; and his mind so hungered for more excitement, that it craved to make certain all which its jealousy and superstition had imaged. He had walked on, lost in this fearful riot, and taking a kind of crazed joy in his bewildered state; Esther's love for him, which he at times thought, past doubt, feigned, the gloom of the hour, and the driving storm, with its confused motions and sounds, made an uproar of the mind which drove out all settled purpose or thought.

The stillness of the place into which he had now entered, where was heard nothing but the slow, regular dripping of the rain from the broken roof upon the hard-trod floor; the lowered and distant sound of the storm without; the sudden change from the whirl and swaying of the trees to the steady walls of the building, put a stop to the workings of his brain, and he gradually fell into a stupor.

When Abel began to recover, he could scarcely raise himself from the ground. He looked round, but could see nothing of Paul. — "They have bound us together; and something is drawing me toward him. There is no help for me; I must go where he goes." — As he was drawn nearer and nearer to the hut, he seemed to struggle and hang back, as if pushed on against his will. At last he reached the door-way, and, clinging

to its side with a desperate hold, as if not to be forced in, put his head forward a little, casting a hasty glance into the building. — "There he is, and alive!" he breathed out.

Paul's stupor was now beginning to leave him; his recollection was returning; and what had passed came back slowly and at intervals. There was something he had said to Esther before leaving home, — he could not tell what; then his gazing after her as she drove from the house; then something of Abel; and he sprang from the ground as if feeling the boy's touch again about his knees; then the ball-room, and a multitude of voices, and all talking of his wife. Suddenly she appeared darting by him; and Frank was there. Then came his agony and tortures again. All returned upon him as in the confusion of a horrible trance. Presently the hut seemed to enlarge, and the walls to rock; and shadows of those he knew, and of terrible beings he had never seen before, were flitting round him, and mocking at him. His own substantial form seemed to him undergoing a change, and taking the shape and substance of the accursed ones at which he looked. As he felt the change going on, he tried to utter a cry, but he could not make a sound, or move a limb. The ground under him rocked and pitched; it grew darker and darker, till everything became visionary; and he thought himself surrounded by spirits, and in the mansions of the damned. Something like a deep, black cloud began to gather gradually round him. The gigantic structure, with its tall, terrific arches, turned slowly into darkness, and the spirits within disappeared, one after another, till, as the ends of the cloud met and closed, he saw the last of them looking at him with an infernal laugh in his undefined visage.

Abel stood speechless, watching him. His consciousness was now leaving him; his head began to swim; he reeled, and as his hand swept down the side of the hut, while trying to save himself, it struck against the handle of a rusty knife that had been left sticking loosely between the logs. — "Let go, let go!" shrieked Abel; "there 's blood on 't! — 't is cursed, 't is cursed!" — As Paul swung round, with the knife in his hand, Abel sprang from the door with a shrill cry, and Paul sank on the floor, muttering to himself, "What said They?"

When he began to come to himself a little, he was still sitting on the ground, his back against the wall. His senses were yet confused. He thought he saw his wife near him and a bloody knife by his side. After sitting a little longer, his mind gradually grew clearer, and at last he felt that his hand held something. As his eye fell on it, and he saw what it was, he leaped upright, with a savage yell, and dashed the knife from him as if it had been an asp stinging him. He stood with his bloodshot eyes fastened on it, his hands spread, and his body shrunk up with horrour. — "Forged in hell! And for me, for me!" he screamed, as he sprang forward, and seized it with a convulsive grasp. — "Damned pledge of the league that binds us!" he cried, holding it up and glaring wildly on it. "And yet a voice did warn me, — of what, I know not. — Which of you put it in this hand? — Speak, — let me look on you! — D' ye hear me, and will not answer? — Nay, nay, what needs it? This tells me, though it speaks not. I know your promptings now," he said, folding his arms deliberately; "your work must be done, and I am doomed to it."

There was an awful calmness in his voice and bear-

ing as he stood. His mind at last rolled back upon the past. As the thought of Esther's love for Frank crossed him, he clutched the knife hard. — Then he heard her call out, "Paul!" And she looked all truth and fondness. — "O, hang with your arms about my neck thus, Esther, and I'll never again doubt you! — Stand off a little. Is not my eye murderous? — Have a care; touch not this bloody hand. — Come to me, my wife; I'll not believe it; 't is false; they lie, all lie, all! — O, spare me, spare me!" he groaned out, throwing himself down and beating the ground madly with his arms. "Let her die, if ye 've ordained it so, but not by me, not by me!" — His limbs gradually relaxed, and he lay silent. The fit of agony had passed. He rose slowly up, putting the knife into his bosom. "'T is in vain, all in vain. I yield me to you. Be it when you will!"

He quitted the hut. The storm had passed over; and as he stood with folded arms before the door-way, he saw the sun playing in chequered spots under the trees, and the myriads of silver rain-drops, falling, or quivering on the leaves, dazzled his sight. — "'T was your accursed power that raised the storm and whirlwind, when you made a man a child of hell; your work is done, and now they 're laid again." — He turned his melancholy eye upward. The clouds lay like snow-drifts along the air, setting off and deepening the clear blue sky. — "You bright messengers from another world, ye bring not glad tidings to me now, as once ye did; your holy influences no more fall on me. You pass me by in silence; yet once you had a voice for me. You go to tell of hope, and speak promises to the pure in heart. Sin holds no communion with you. Once, all this beauty had been deep joy to me; but

now, it lies upon the eye, yet enters not this bosom. No, no, now another sense is here, and other sights. Tormenting flames, like those I 'm soon to go to, shoot up, and burn me, — burn me. And this narrow body seems a dark, deep cavern. And the eye turns inward; and what sees it there? Spirits, uncouth things, sporting and fighting there. Yes, 't is like the place you just now took me to, when you made me yours, and put upon me this deed of horrour. Let me do it quickly, quickly. Make me not walk longer in all this brightness, a fiend of darkness. Hide me from it, and I 'll — I 'll come to you."

He soon grew calm again. The look of despair passed off, and a mysterious gloom, and fixed, dreadful purpose, seemed to settle on him. He walked forward. As he drew near Abel, who was sitting where he left him, the boy quaked and looked aghast at him, as at one who had just risen out of the abode of evil spirits. And well he might, for there was a visionary horrour mingled with desperate resoluteness in his face, which would have startled a firm man to have looked on. He turned his dark eye slowly down on Abel, without speaking, and then moved on. The boy felt as if all strength went out of him. He got up with difficulty, and followed with a watchful look, and at a greater distance than usual. He could scarcely draw his breath; and when Paul's pace slackened a little, now and then, as he was lost in thought, Abel would stop, fearing to be any nearer to him.

When they at length reached the top of the ridge, Paul stopped, and looked down upon the fields and houses which lay beyond it. Abel retreated a little; yet he dared not run. At length Paul turned on him. He shrunk back and tried to look another way; but

his eye seemed drawn back and fastened upon Paul's. He writhed, and twisted, and clasped his hands, and looked in Paul's face, as if imploring to be spared. Still he drew nearer and nearer, as if a snake charmed him, till he stood close to Paul's side. "Think you, Abel," said Paul at last, raising his arm and pointing toward the houses, "that the storm drove thither, or that it was up in that cursed place back yonder only?" To hear him speak once more was like returning life to Abel. "I 'm afraid," said he, "I 'm afraid, but I can't guess. And I shall never know," he added, tears trickling through his lashes; "for not a soul that I should ask would tell me. No one speaks to Abel but you. May be they had better not, for I might be made to harm them, too. — Save me from it!" he cried, falling on his knees before Paul. "You fed me, and spoke to me. O, I would die sooner!"

"'T is done already; your work is done, and mine is to come. There is no escape." Abel fell like one dead at Paul's feet. "Poor wretch!" said Paul, looking down upon him. "The instrument of my doom, too. And yet I would not curse you. Twinned with me in misery, and bound to crime by chains that can't be broken, I 'll feel a fellow's kindness for you while we 're here. What 's to come beyond, I know not. And is it us alone you take in our vices? Or are babes and innocents all, all swept into your toils, you Powers?"

He stooped down, and, raising Abel, set him with his back against a rock. The boy opened his eyes and looked round him, as if not knowing where he was. Paul spoke kindly to him, and when he had a little recovered, bade him take comfort, and then went back to get water for him. He reached the

place; and tearing some hairy moss from the rock the water trickled over, and soaking it in one of the little hollows, he carried it in the palms of his hands. When Abel saw it, he gave an hysteric laugh, and seizing it, sucked it greedily through his long teeth.

"Can you walk now, Abel?"

"I'm quite well again," answered he, looking up at Paul, as if to thank him.

When they had reached the clump of locusts, Paul said to him, "You must leave me, now. You must be faint for want of food"; and he gave Abel a piece of money. Abel looked at the money, and then at Paul. "And what good will this do me? Nobody will sell to me."

"Not sell to you, boy! Why, that buys souls daily! Men and women sell themselves to one another for that, and swear before God 't is all for love. Did you go to them, child, tailed and clawed like the devil himself, they 'd feed you for that, though 't would be your last hour else." Abel seemed comforted at this; and, putting the money into his pocket as he thanked Paul, took his way to the village. Paul followed the path that led home.

When he turned a little wood, and the house appeared in sight, he stopped. A sense of guilt and fear checked him; and it was some time before he had resolution enough to go on. "What! shall I be driven from my own door like a beast of prey! They know me not, nor the work I am ordained to. Why does my very own make me tremble thus?"

It was a warm, sunshiny noon when he reached the house, and there was that stillness round, which, in the country, sometimes pervades nature like a diffused spiritual presence. Paul felt as if this brightness and

quiet betrayed him. Everything he passed by seemed to have a knowledge of him, and strange eyes were on him. He hardly dared look round. He cast his eyes up at his wife's window. The shutters were closed. "Sleeps yet!" said he; "that is well!" and he entered the house with more composure.

He went with a cautious step to his own room, and locked himself in. As he passed near his glass, he started back. "Have they not only changed my soul," cried he, "but transformed this body, too, that the world may know and shun me? Is the deed writ here, — here on this forehead, that men may read it when they look on me? — I 'll not live on, the dread and mock of mortals. Now I 'll do it, — now, while she sleeps, and end it. Then take me to you, fit for the hell I go to." His eyes gleamed fire as he clinched the knife in his raised hand, as if about to strike the blow. At the sight of himself again, he dropped the knife and covered his eyes with his hands. "Take, take that vision from me, that tells me what I am, and shall be! O, show me not myself, cursed and fallen! I'll do it; but blind me to the sense of what I am and must be." He had undergone too much to bear it longer, and sinking into a chair, his limbs relaxed, his eyes grew heavy, and he fell into a deep sleep.

Esther waked refreshed; for Paul's affectionate tones and kind manner when she left him quieted her spirit. When she inquired for her husband, the servant said he saw him come into the house, and believed he was in his room. Esther went to the door and knocked gently; there was no answer. She tried to open it, but it was locked. She called out, "Paul!" — "Is the hour come?" cried he, starting out of his sleep. "I 'm ready then"; and putting his hand to his bosom, the

knife was gone. "Where have I been?" said he to himself, looking round. "Was 't all a dream? Was there, then, no instrument of murder given me? And is there no deed of death on my hands? — She 's not to die, then, and I am free of them!" he shouted.

"Paul! Paul!" called out Esther, terrified at the sound, "let me come to you."

"Yes, yes; you may come safely now. I 'll not harm you; upon my life, I'll not harm you," he said partly to himself, and moving towards the door. As he advanced, his eye fell on the knife, as it lay on the floor. His blood ran cold, and a sick feeling came over him. Then sight and sense left him. Esther listened; but all was still. — "He 's dead, he 's dead!" shrieked she, trying to force the door. The noise brought him to himself. — "Hush! hush!" he whispered, picking up the knife with a shaking hand, and concealing it in his bosom; "let there be no noise." — He stepped slowly and softly to the door, and opened it cautiously. He raised his finger in sign of silence. — "Hush! or you 'll rouse them. Do not tremble so at me. There is no danger yet; the hour is not come."

Esther entered the room. As Paul took her hand, she felt his cold and damp. "Paul, my husband, what is it? Why do you look so wild and lost? Rouse yourself; tell me what has happened."

"Happened?" repeated he unconsciously. He stood a little while silent and abstracted. "Did you ask what has happened?" Then putting his mouth close to her ear, and whispering eagerly, — "To hear it would be your last. What 's seen in the spirit cannot be spoken to flesh and blood." — She shuddered, his voice sounded so unearthly.

"Merciful Heaven! save him, save him! let him not go mad! Do with me what Thou wilt, but spare my husband!" — Her prayer passed through Paul's dark and troubled mind like the light.

"Is there yet a Heavenly Power? And are there holy angels to guard us still? The fiends have not all, then, and their domain fills not the whole air? — No, no, 't is not all dark; there 's light beyond. See there, Esther," said he, seizing her arm, as he pointed eagerly upward; "there are bright forms, dazzling bright, moving in it. Canst see them?" He looked as if more than mortal vision was given to him. The sense of all about him was gone, and he went on talking to himself as he gazed. "There they are, passing away till swallowed up in the very brightness! Now they come again, hosts, myriads, and with the speed of fire! The darkness and the evil ones are flying, — they are gone! Now the light gushes! 'T is all, all one flood of glory round me! I 'm safe, I 'm safe, Esther!" he gasped out, as he fell on her neck.

"O my wretched, lost husband!" she cried, as she folded her arms round him, and looked upward with streaming eyes; "is there no help for him? Will not Heaven have pity on him?" He remained silent and motionless. — "O, speak to me, be it but one word!" said she, raising him gently. "Look at me, will you not, Paul?" He did look, but it was as upon one he did not know. — "Why do you glare upon me so? Do you not know me, Paul? — Esther, your wife?"

"I think, — I remember —— Yes, 't is all clear now. But They have not betrayed me to you? They 've not told you what 's to be done? Believe them not; they belie me. Did I not just now tell you I was safe? — And, then, no harm can come to you, you know."

"Harm! Safe! What mean you? Do not keep me in this ignorance. By the love you bear me, tell me what it is that shakes your reason so."

"That must not be now. I serve the powers of the air. When you 're a spirit in heaven, and I in darkness, you 'll know all. — There! They flit, like shadows, in the light, and keep the sun from me; yet you are in it. That tokens what is to be."

He paused. His wildness left him, and he seemed to be musing. At last he spoke. — "The hour is coming, Esther, — it breathes upon me now, — when death will part us, and we shall never meet more, never more! Thy immortal countenance will then be radiant with holy joy; but I shall no more look on it, and thy voice of love will no more sound for me. — Weep not for me; it can avail me nothing; the doom is on me. — Nay, nay, ask me not what I mean. The book in which my fate is written is sealed to you; you may not read it. — I must be alone awhile," said he, opening the door. "Do not linger so. The time is coming when you would fain flee from me, and may not. No more tears, Esther," he said, taking her hands in his, as she looked up silently in his face. "What is this world's misery to those who look for rest beyond it?" He pressed his lips to her forehead, and, turning back, shut the door after her.

When Abel came to the village street, he walked through it with more confidence than he had done for many a day; for he remembered Paul's last words to him, and felt as if he had that in his pocket which would find him friends again. When he reached the shop door where he intended buying food, it was near noon, and the little room was filled with the wise ones who had come together to take their dram, and settle

church and state. He stopped at the door and looked anxiously in, beginning to feel for his money; for he no more expected to gain admittance without it here, than one does at a show. He stepped upon the door-stone, and began playing his change from one hand to the other, looking first at it and then at the shopkeeper.

"Where got you those white-boys, you starveling? Come in, and let me take a peep at them. Is 't honest money?"

"I came honestly by it," said Abel, trembling, and venturing a little within the door.

"That 's no concern of mine," said the man. "And many a glass of liquor I should miss the selling of, gentlemen, if none but fair gains bought it."

"Who have you here?" said one, setting down his mug, which had just touched his lips, and moving off, as Abel sidled up to the counter. — "Why, 't is the cursed boy! You 'll not take his money, Sam!"

"Will I not?" replied Sam. "Hand over that bit, and tell us what you want. I hold man or boy, who has money in his purse, to be every inch a gentleman." — Sam's customers began to draw back. As some were going out, he called after them. — "Stay," said he, throwing the piece on the counter, "and hear it ring. There 's music for you, my lads, sweeter than a church-bell."

"Don't take it, Sam," said the customer. "He 's sent; and it will fare ill with you if you have dealings with him."

"Not take it! Why, Mr. Stitchcloth, you would rig him up out of your cabbagings fit to be the Old One's harlequin, for another such piece as this," said Sam, letting it drop through the hole in the counter, into the drawer. — "There, did n't you hear them welcome him,

the bright lads! What care I whose coining it is? The devil may have his mint, if he chooses, and at little cost too. Who, think ye, but he, set the wheels of that coach agoing, that is passing there? Did not she within it, looking so fair and smiling, sell herself to one as old as Satan, though to my mind not so handsome or proper a gentleman? — 'T is the way of the world, and I 'll not be singular! Bread, did you ask for, my pretty youth? There it is," said he, with a cast of his eye at the baker. "But have a care that it does n't poison you, for the devil is the father of cheats, and his child had the making on 't." — Abel looked pleased as he took it. — "There 's a sweet smile! Call again, my lad, but at another hour; for these gentlemen have no great liking to you, and you may stop the running of my tap."

"I 'll never take change of you again," said the tailor, as he left the shop, "till that draw is empty; for I would as soon handle iron at white-heat as touch that piece." — Sam laughed heartily, and called out to Abel, as he crawled from the shop, "Give my compliments to your master, boy, and tell him that I should be happy to supply him or any of his likely family." — Abel bent his way toward the house of his protector, and took a seat under the hedge, waiting his coming.

When Paul was once more alone, his last mournful words to Esther still sounded in his ears. But her prayer for him (of which he heard something, as in a dream) as she folded her protecting arms round him; the home and shelter he felt her to be to him, when he fell on her neck and cried out that he was safe; the expression of woe, and pity, and love with which she looked up in his face at leaving him, — came all at once

to his mind with a clear and calming influence. He felt the spring of blood once more at his heart; and his old affections flowed through him again with a living warmth. The passions that had raged in him like fire went suddenly out; the horrours that had whirled round him and crazed his brain passed off; he felt again the earth firm under him, and saw that he stood in the cheerful light which fell like a blessing upon all things that lay in the beautiful and assured tranquillity of nature. It was like coming out of one of those terrific dreams, in which we have passed through multitudes of horrid sights and dangers, and finding it bright morning, and all as safe and quiet as it was yesterday. The mere returning of the simple sense of reality brought tears of joy and thankfulness to his eyes. — "Am I again among the abodes of men, and standing amidst the works of God? Are light, and truth, and beauty once more around me? And were all the horrours I have passed through a conjuration and a lie, raised to damn me? Come, and assure me of it, Esther; for though thou walkest with me here, thou seemest to me kindred with higher beings. O, I have gazed upon thee, till thy rapt looks and beautiful motions have made me think thee an imbodied spirit, revealing to me the creations that fill the world beyond us, — a fair and passing vision returning to the world, which, for a while, thou cam'st from. — Let me go to thee," said he, quitting his room, "and have thine eye rest on mine, and hear thy clear voice, and listen while you tell me you will not yet go from me."

Esther was lying on a sofa, her full dark hair hanging over her face, and snow-white arm, on which her forehead rested. — "My wife," said Paul, as he kneeled down by her, "have I lived only to afflict you? I

could throw away my life, and count it nothing, to bring you peace. I should have been the soother of your sorrows, and have brought you your little daily joys. And is it I who have broken your heart, and made life comfortless to you?"

Esther sobbed. — "No answer for me, Esther? Then it is so. Why do I ask? And yet a vain wish is struggling within me that you might say something to quiet a self-accusing mind. My will is not in my act; but when I wound your heart, mine bleeds doubly."

"I do believe it," said she, raising herself, and resting on him. "I have not lost your love yet; but dear as it has ever been to me, it is of small worth without your confidence. It cannot content me unless I feel, as it were, our hearts' blood mingling and flowing on warm together. To be loved as I would be, we must have one life, one being; our sorrows must no more part us than our joys. But you have troubles of the mind, and shut me out, like a stranger, from them; and dreadful thoughts o'ermaster you, and fatal purposes, to which you seem driven; and vain surmises and dark givings-out are all I know of them. Is this love, Paul? Is it all *your* heart asks for? And can it be in your noble nature to give only the poor remnant of your mind and heart to her whose whole soul would alone content you? — Yet this is nothing," she cried, hiding her face. "Those eyes which had ever but one look for me, last night were turned in anger, and with a searching sternness, on me. — Last night was it? Fears and grief have made it seem an age since! This I did not deserve, Paul, however too poor a thing I may be for a mind of a reach like yours to rest on."

"Your words go like swords through me. Do not

break down this overburdened spirit with your just complainings, Esther. I would not be what I am. Think you it is in my disposition to torture and afflict you as I have done? — Look up, my love, and tell me if I am not changed. There is an inward peace here, which I never felt till now. I 've been out of the world, out of myself; and this naked soul has driven through fire and whirlwinds; but it has come back to its place of rest, to its quiet trust in thee, and the repose of thy full love. Could I look on this face and — let me not name it. Is not this eye open as the day? And do I not read truth written on this brow? When I first saw you, Esther, you seemed made up of sensations more exquisite than other mortals knew how to think of, as if of a nature between us and angels, and moulded to live a perpetual self-delight. And when you touched a flower or took its prefume, I thought of the light and breeze which shone with its beauty and was filled with its odour. You seemed to me too joyous and pure ever to have felt our passions or known our sins. And when I have sat by you, as I do now, with the soft touch of your hand in mine, and your eyes resting fondly on mine, I have felt as if undergoing a gentle change, and becoming a nature like unto yours; it was to me such as I have thought would be the intercourse of mortals, when these bodies become incorruptible and glorified in another world. — Why should I try to tell what I now feel? It is a vain thing. Let me be still, while my senses drink it in."

Esther hung over him, and tears of joy filled her eyes. One fell on Paul's forehead. She wiped it gently away, and then touched her lips where it fell.

"Take them not away yet, Esther," he murmured;

"they are the seal of pardon for my wrongs to you, the pledge of your enduring love for me, the promise of unchanging joy through life, a joy that is to purify me and fit me to live on with you for ever." — His voice faltered, and she saw a tear trickle from under his closed lids.

"O, I could have lived ages of misery for an hour like this, Paul, were life to end when that hour had run out; but I feel that years are in store for us, blessed as our souls can bear."

"I hardly dared look up," said he, "till I heard your voice, lest, waking, I should find it a heavenly trance I had been rapt in. Come, let me rouse myself, and make sure that all is real," he said, putting his arm round her, as he rose and walked with her to the window.

"How fresh and new all things look; or rather, how like it is to our return to old and remembered places, where nature still looks young and healthful, though we are growing old. But *we* are not growing old, Esther, for life is again beginning in us. Is it a new creation, or are other senses given me with which to see and feel it? The boughs swing up, and the leaves play as cheerfully as if a breeze, for which they had drooped and waited, had just blown on them, and the declining sun lights up all things gloriously. What a glow it sends over that hedge," said he, as his eye passed along it. — "Hide me! He 's come again! he follows me!" cried Paul, turning terrour-struck from the window. Esther looked at him. His face was wild and ghastly, and he tottered as he threw himself on her shoulder for support.

"Speak, speak, Paul! Who — what is it — where?"

"There! there! do you not see him?" he uttered, in

a hard-breathed whisper, and pointing back with his finger, without daring to look round.

"That boy?" asked Esther, trembling; "I 've seen him before. Who and what is he, that looks so like a tormented thing thrown out upon the earth to pain and mischief?"

"Speak not of him, — power is given him. I feel him on me now," he screeched, as he sprang with an enormous leap from her. — "Off! off!" he cried, struggling as if to loose himself from some strong grasp. — "They call me, — thousands of voices in my ears! Hear them, hear them, Esther! — I come! I come!" he yelled, darting from the room, his hair on end, his spread hands and arms stretched out before him. — Esther tried to call to him as she ran toward him. Her lips moved, but there was no sound; and she fell to the floor.

The shouts and cry alarmed the servants, who rushed into the room. They raised Esther, and laid her on the sofa. She gasped once or twice; her eyes opened, then closed again. At last the colour came to her cheek, and starting up and staring round her: — "My husband! Where is he? Fly, seek him!"

"Which way is he gone, madam?"

"I know not. Bring him; on your lives, bring him!" She rose and hurried to the outer door.

"Stay, dear madam!" said her waiting-woman. "Whither are you going at this hour?"

"Going to my husband, if he is on the earth, — or to my grave."

"Do not leave the house bareheaded, madam."

"Well, well, bring me something, quickly." The woman returned, and was about following Esther. — "Stay here," said she; "he may return while I am

gone, and miss me. — I can go alone," she murmured, as she left the door. "When Paul leaves me, what has the earth for me to fear or care for?" — She took her way to a large, intricate wood, which lay off at a distance from the house, and bordering upon part of the rocky ridge.

Soon after Esther left the house, Frank called to see her. The woman told all she knew. — "Gone out, and alone, and in such a state of mind! Which way?" — "Toward the wood you see yonder, Sir." Frank left the house in pursuit of her. He was alarmed for her, for he feared Paul, though he knew not why. He entered the wood, and wandered through it a long time without seeing her. The light was growing fainter and fainter, and he became more uneasy. At last he found her, leaning against a tree, pale and still. He went up to her, and spoke kindly. She seemed not to regard what he said, but asked, "Is he nowhere to be found?" — "Search is making," replied Frank. "Let me help you home, for you are exhausted; and you can be of no service here." — She put her arm within his, and walked on slowly, trembling from weakness and fear. Her tears fell fast; for Frank's friendly and gentle manner to her, in her desolate sorrow, touched her heart.

When Paul left the house, his mind was so hurried and confused from the sudden shock and change he had undergone, that he missed the passage across the ridge, and continued wandering along over and between the broken clefts, till at last he came upon the wood to which Esther had gone. He was pushing swiftly through it, when he caught sight of Frank and Esther at a distance. He sprang forward, once, with the leap of a tiger, then stood still. Every passion

within him seemed suddenly struck dead, and the mind appeared collecting itself for something fatal: all was gloomy and hushed. When he followed them, it was slowly and with a cautious step, as if he feared they would hear his tread. He kept at a distance, without losing sight of them, till they left the wood; then stood concealed at the edge of it, watching them as they went toward the house.

Esther's strength gradually returned; and she no longer needed the support of Frank's arm. As Paul saw her draw her arm from Frank's, "'T is a pity," he said, in bitter scorn, "the wood could not have gone with you, that the world might not interrupt your loves." He did not follow them, but continued pacing to and fro. Sometimes a muttering sound came from him; and then again a vehement gesture showed starts of passion. At length he seemed to wake again to a clearer sense of the past, and his step quickened. "Yes," he cried, "she did cross me, — I saw her. She passed like an angel before me, — and then! then she vanished. Why am I fooled with this show of innocence and beauty? The fiends have all! — The world 's a hell; and all is to mock and torture us with longings. What! flesh and blood, and look so pure, when the pulse beats high, — hot! hot! And seem as ignorant as infancy, as if the rebel body told them nothing. Well may the spirits laugh at our self-cheating! And me, too, dark and ungainly, — gloomy, — silent! — O, 't was a pretty fancy, to have a fantastic passion to fondle my ugliness for a while, then turn to the other, and clasp him in heightened beauty! — Ease me, ease me of this torture!" he cried, darting from the wood.

It was near midnight when he turned homeward.

He stopped under an elm near the house, without any settled purpose. Esther's father had been sent for, but was absent; and Frank, unwilling to leave the house, remained till late. The clock in the village at last struck twelve, the moon was down, and a black cloud over the sky. At last the door opened, and as Frank came out, Paul saw him by the light in the hall. He came so close to the tree, that Paul drew up straight, as he passed; but so dark was it, that he only seemed like a blacker shadowy substance going by. "Now might I do it," thought Paul; "but he is not my victim; some other, doomed like me, must do that deed." When the sound of Frank's tread at length died away, Paul went to the door and tried cautiously to open it. It was fastened. — "Shall I knock? No, 't is better so. — I have it. I 'll prove her; I 'll know her false ere I do it. — To the hut, — to the hut! I 'll watch her nightly. And Abel, he who serves me, and whom my soul serves, him I will use too."

"It may not be," he muttered, as he groped his way along, "that the last sin 's committed. And shall I kill her for her thoughts? Who, then, would live the day out if evil thoughts were death to us? Do they not mingle, like blaspheming spirits, with our adoring moments? And shall we creatures of corruption ask of our fellows love constant and untainted? But to feign it so! To weep over me in excess of joy and fondness! — So she protested. And I with a simple faith believed it, did I? Women's tears! Why, they are very proverbs. — The wood! the wood! Puts her arm in his, does she? — and leans on him, too, in heart-sick languishment! Would, and yet dares not; loves the sin to very madness, and sighs, 'O, that it were no sin!' — Away, away; let me not look on 't! 'T is all

a lie, a phantasm raised by the powers of hell to make my soul theirs. — What! innocent, and died by my hand? Hear them, — how they mock and laugh at me! I'll know more, — all!"

He made his way forward as well as he could, but the darkness and stillness oppressed him. It was as if life in the universe was at an end; nothing but death everywhere, and like a power. He was climbing a rock, when a cold, lean hand suddenly pressed against his face, and a shriek went up that made the air one shrill sound; it pierced his very body. He could not speak, nor move a limb. "You child of hell," he called out, at last, "who set you on to this? Speak, where are you? Won't you answer?"

Abel, believing that he had touched one of those beings who continually haunted him, had in his terrour fallen from the rock. — "Was it not one of them?" he cried, in a feeble voice. "Is it you, my master? Do come and help me. I'm bruised, dreadfully bruised. I meant no harm."

"And what brought you here at this hour, so dark a night?" asked Paul, getting down by him.

"I was after you, Sir."

"And why do you hunt me thus? Is it to make me like yourself, a child of the damned? Why were you under the hedge to-day? O, that was a moment of more than earthly joy to me, and your blasted form crossed me and flung me out from heaven!"

"Do not speak to me so. I do what I must do: and They will never let me leave you any more."

"Well! well! but what made you look so soon for me here again?"

"I heard you cry out, and saw you run from the house; and then your wife fell, I thought, as she was

passing the window; and then I remembered what you told me, and what They are always telling me about something to be done. And it was put into my mind that that was it; and somehow, I can't tell how, that I had made you kill her." Paul shuddered. "I would have run after you; but I was afraid they would see me and catch me; so I crawled through the hedge, and went away round the house; and when I got there I could see nothing of you. And I looked all along this passage and over the wood. At last, Sir, I went to the very hut, and looked in, — I did, truly, Sir, though something glimmered over my eyes so, I could hardly see. I could n't find you anywhere; so I thought I would go back to the house and wait till night." There was nothing more said. Abel soon fell asleep, while Paul sat musing till daybreak.

The clouds now began to break up and move off like an army of giants; and the sun soon appeared, flinging his light across them, and throwing over them gorgeous apparel of purple and gold, making them fit attendants on such a king. "Rouse up, and follow me," said Paul, shaking Abel by the arm.

As he drew near the hut, the vision he had seen there, the world of terrours that had been opened to him in trance, and the instrument then put into his hand, and for a purpose of which he could not doubt, came to his mind like a fatal certainty from which there was no turning away. He did not recoil in horrour; there was no shuddering at the thought of the deed, no agony of prayer for escape. It acted like long dungeon darkness upon him. A sullen stillness spread over his mind, dulling his senses, and filling the soul with one dark, sleepy thought, dreamlike and dim. He entered the hut slowly, and stood in the middle of

it. No muttering sound came from him, nor did he move a limb; his eyes rolled like a blind man's, seeing nothing, and searching for light. Abel, who had ventured as far as the door, stood aghast and breathless, looking for the moment when he would sink into the ground, or be swept off in sheets of fire. It was nearly an hour before there was motion in him. At last his head sank on his chest, his eyes were cast down, and Abel heard him breathe, once, long and heavy. He came toward the door with a slow, wandering step. Abel shrunk from him as if he had been a dead man put in motion. He went to the edge of the bank, and sat down upon the roots of the pine, his feet resting on the sand. Abel still kept his eye upon him, in awful suspense. There was a slender stone lying amongst the roots. Paul's eye fell on it, and became fixed. By and by he put out his hand and took it up. He continued a long while turning it over, and feeling it, and looking at it on all sides. He put his hand to his bosom, then drew it back, giving a nod, as if saying all was as it should be. "Come hither, Abel," he said. Abel went, as if drawn to him. "Here 's more money for thy day's meal," he said, taking some from his pocket. Abel put out his hand, but jerked it back as Paul's came near it, and the money fell on the sand. He stooped and picked it up. Paul took no notice of his fears. "Go, next, to my house; find out what you can, and bring me word. Think not to betray me," he continued, without looking up. "I am with you wherever you go." Abel seemed to wither at the words.

Paul fixed his eye in side glance on him, till he was out of sight; then, looking cautiously round, drew the knife slowly from his bosom. It was pointed. He felt

of it. The point was dull. He drew it once across the stone. The sound curdled his blood. He went on with his work. The sun flashed upon him from the sand; there was no breeze among the branches, nor anything stirring for miles round. No sound reached his ear but the hot, singing noise of the insects under the tree, and the whetting of the knife. Blazing noon came, and Paul still went on with his work, stopping only to feel the point of the knife, examine its handle, and scrape off the rust about it. The sun was at last about setting, no cloud near; it was glowing, and its rim clearly marked. He looked on it wistfully, as if praying in mind to it not to forsake him. It half disappeared, then shot suddenly and silently down. His eyes shut; his face for a moment was tremulous and mournful, but he did not sigh. When he looked up again, there were no bright tree-tops, no holy vesper of birds; it was all sad, still twilight. Presently a light night-breeze passed over the pines, which gave out a low, mourning sound. It struck on his ear like the notes of spirits wailing the newly departed. He started up, and looked into the shadowy wood, as if he saw there the passing pall. He waved his hand once or twice before his eyes, to scatter the vision; then turning round again, and placing the stone back among the roots, and putting the knife in his bosom, went and seated himself before the hut.

Abel returned at night, but with little news. The servants, he said, were continually going out and in, but they would not look at him, nor answer him when he spoke to them.

"Did you see none besides the servants?"

"Only young Mr. Ridgley. He went into the house about noon; but I saw nothing more of him."

"I will know where he is to be seen, then," muttered Paul, rising.

He passed on through the wood and the rocky passage, then took his way to the house. All was quiet. He walked round it, but saw nothing. It was to him like a place he was shut out from for ever, the only blessed spot in a world where all else was cursed. He stood looking on it, with longing and home-sickness. By and by a light appeared in his wife's chamber. He raised his eyes to it as to a loved star. Presently Esther passed near the window. At the sight of her he covered his eyes with his hands. He could bear it no longer; but, rushing from the house, hurried back to the hut.

The next morning Abel was sent again; and the day was wearing away like the former, Paul scarcely conscious what he was doing, or what was the purpose of his mind. Abel returned a little past noon, telling him that he saw his wife, with Frank, going toward the wood on the other side of the ridge, about an hour before. Paul sprang up and ran forward, Abel following him. He went over every mound and through every valley. Frank, however, had, in the mean time, returned with Esther from searching after her husband, (her father having before taken another route,) and, recollecting the Devil's Haunt, as it was called, set off alone for it immediately. After much clambering and toil, he reached it, traversed the ground, and examined the hut; but no trace appeared of Paul. He returned late, tired and disappointed.

The sight of the wood, and what he had witnessed there, excited Paul's mind, so that he continued like a dog in full chase through it till near midnight, without considering how idle was his search at that hour.

At last he became exhausted; his torpor returned, and he went back to his hiding-place, like one walking in his sleep.

About dusk, the following day, Abel returned with the information that Esther's father was to set off the next morning on a journey of a few days. "Then," thought Paul, "will be my time to make all sure. No husband, no father by, still rooms, and moonlight. Will these not put toys into the brain, and make the heart beat?"

"You must see him start, and mark who goes with him."

Abel was in full time to see Mr. Waring enter his carriage. He had set off to acquaint Paul's father with what had happened, and to consult with him what course to pursue. He would have gone sooner, had he not been afraid to leave Esther, whom he stayed with to soothe and comfort; for her mind was nearly unsettled. Frank promised, at his going, that no pains should be spared to discover Paul, and that he would be as a brother to Esther. The old gentleman left home with a sorrowful, misgiving heart; and Abel hastened to make known his departure, which took place about noon.

Paul sat, as he had done each day before, in the same spot, passing the knife slowly over the stone, then stopping and feeling it, and looking it over. His expression, though dark, was dull and abstracted, and his motions heavy, slow, and uncertain. The blood moved sluggishly, and life seemed scarcely going on in him. When Abel came up, he did not, as usual, conceal the knife. Abel knew it instantly, though now bright and sharpened. All his horrours rushed upon him; his knees knocked against each other, his hands struck

against his thighs, and he fell on the sand, at Paul's feet. — "The knife! the knife! hide it! hide it! There 's murder! — the deed 's doing, now, now! Save me! take me out o' this blood!" Paul leaped upon the bank, and stood looking down on Abel, in horrour. He seemed to him struggling in a red, clotted sea, which presently appeared sinking into the ground, leaving drops here and there rolling on the sand, till, at last, there were no more of them.

Abel recovered slowly; and, raising himself on his knees, looked imploringly in Paul's face. He saw nothing there but an unchanging, sullen gloom.

"And what do you bring me?" asked Paul.

"I saw him leave the house in his carriage this noon."

"Alone?"

"Yes, Sir, alone."

"To-night it must be done, then. Do you not hear them telling me, Abel?"

"Send me not again!" cried Abel. "O, spare me!"

"Is it not fated, boy? Think you the bonds of hell, that now hold you, can be broken? Look in. Is not He there, busy at your heart? Your work is doing, — mine 's to come, quickly."

"We 're lost, then!" cried Abel, springing up. "Let me go with you."

Paul continued wandering through the wood; Abel following close after him, wherever he turned. They went on in silence; Paul now and then sending a glance back on Abel, as if he were some evil thing dogging him at his heels.

He at last bent his way to the passage over the ridge, and when he had passed it stopped suddenly, turning his eye on Abel. Abel came up. Paul pointed

towards the house. "Bring me word quickly." He then sat down upon a rock, gazing, like an outcast, upon the distant chimney-tops of his own home, while Abel crawled away to his appointed task. Before long, Abel returned, saying he had been round the house, but saw nothing, till at last, as he was coming away, Mr. Ridgley passed him, and went in. A flush crossed Paul's cheek, but he said nothing.

Frank, according to his promise to her father, went to see Esther. She was walking the room when he entered, her arms folded, her long, dark hair fallen round her pale face and sunken eyes. She looked up at him, as asking if there were any good thing to tell her. He understood it. "Nothing as yet, but I hope ——" She shook her head despondingly, as she turned away and walked to the window. "Do not despair," said he, going toward her; "all may be right again in a few days." — She drew up, as she turned round upon him. Her look had something of reproach in it, as if it were not in his nature to know what she felt, and that he was thinking to cheat a common sorrow. — He shrunk back, and moved toward the door. She followed hastily after him, and touched his arm. "Nay, nay, go not from me so; trouble has made me strange. My more than brother," said she, giving him her pallid hand, "if you never see me again, do not remember that I ever looked in unkindness on you. Or if I ever spoke lightly when you were earnest, forget it, will you? — It seems to me, I think," she said, after a pause, and passing her hand over her brow, as if trying to recall her thoughts, — "I think I once made light of what you said to me. — Well, well, there 's no more trifling in this world. — Yes, for others, but not for me. — All 's dark here; — go where 't is brighter!" He looked at her earnestly. He

saw the hurried state of mind pass off, and her calm sorrow return. He bade her a kind good night, saying he would see her again in the morning. "Perhaps so," said she to herself, as he left the house.

She went to the door, and stood looking upward at the stars, and then upon the fair, silent moon, whose light fell like sleep upon the earth. "So I stood, and so the moon shone on us, when he first told me that he loved me. — And there — there he comes!" she cried, as her eye caught the figure of a man descending a hill on the road. He sank gradually down, till lost behind the hedge. At last she heard his step as he drew near the house. "Paul!" she called out, in an eager, shrill voice. There was no answer but that of the sharp, taunting echoes which rang off among the rocks. "He's dead, he's dead, and they mock me with it!" She listened with a beating heart. The man passed by, and the sound of his steady tread died slowly away along the road. She walked back into the parlour; and lying down on the sofa, her sufferings and present state wandered like a dream through her mind.

Mr. Waring began his journey; but the farther he went from home, the more troubled he became. A misgiving, which he could not control, took possession of him; and he at last ordered his servant to drive back. As soon as he reached home, he set off for his daughter's house.

Paul had remained seated on the rock. Abel was a little below him, looking wistfully and eagerly at him, as if his life depended upon each look and motion in him. For a long time, there was no more movement or change of expression, than if he had been a statue cut out of the rock he sat on. But as the time drew near, the heavy, settled gloom broke slowly up,

and troubled and fearful thoughts began to stir themselves. Abel saw sudden tremblings pass over his frame, and a twitching of the muscles of the face. As the huge, mysterious shadows of evening gathered round him, he looked hastily about, and there were sudden flashings of the eye. He muttered something, as if the shadows had been spirits come to watch and warn him to his work. Abel looked on with clasped hands, as if praying it might not be, till he became so weak that he could hardly keep his seat. "They are on him now!" cried Abel to himself. "O, how they torture him! And they are coming, — I feel them coming, — they are seizing me!" — A cold sweat ran over his body.

The twilight died away. For a while Paul became motionless again, and lost in thought; till, leaping suddenly to the ground, with his eye eagerly fixed, grasping the knife and crying out, "On! on! I'll follow you!" he rushed swiftly forward. — "Stay! stay!" shrieked Abel, darting after him, and seizing upon the skirts of his coat. Paul ran on, till he dragged Abel to the earth, and his hold loosened. He turned and saw the poor boy stretched on the ground. — "Stop! let me go with you!" gasped out Abel. "Do not murder, — murder!"

"Murder? The deed 's yours, — theirs. They who set you on to curse me, — all do it. — 'T is done! One hell swallows up all!" he screamed, spurning Abel from him, and rushing on again. This was too much for Abel's weakened reason. To believe he had been used as the eternal curse of the man who had been kind to him and nourished him, when no one else would so much as look on him, and to be thrown off at last by him, too! — He sprang from the ground, he

leaped, he danced, he shouted, and ran in, mad, among the rocks.

When Mr. Waring reached the house, he found his daughter lying in a state of mind but faintly conscious of what had passed. He took her hand, and called her by name. She looked up at him surprised. — "I thought you had gone, Sir! Why are you here?" she asked eagerly, as she rose. "Is he found? is he mad, — dead?"

"We have discovered nothing; but I was unwilling to leave you."

"Then *you* would not leave me; yet he could, — he could leave me, — break my heart, and leave me to die alone, all alone. — Do not blame me, Paul; indeed, indeed, I meant nothing. I know mortal cannot tell or think how much you love me. Come, let me part back your hair. — So! so! I must smooth that brow, too. There! there! Now you look as you do when you call me your own Esther!"

"My child, my daughter, try to recollect yourself."

"I do now; but my mind wanders strangely. O my father, he had a soul so large! And when wild thoughts, I know not what they were, did not possess it, it was so full of love for me! They fired his brain, and he 's gone away to die, none know whither; and I cannot go to him. — But I, too, shall soon die; and then I 'll meet him where there 's no more trouble," she sobbed out, as she fell on her father's neck, while he supported her in his arms.

At this instant Paul reached one of the windows; the curtains were partly closed. There was a dim light in the room. He had heard that the father had gone on his journey; and, not long before, Abel had seen Frank go into the house. He could just perceive

his wife hanging round some one's neck, and the man's arm round her. At the sight, he gave a shout of demoniac triumph, and ran from the window. Loud as it was, she was too much lost in her wretchedness to hear it. Her father was alarmed, and, without telling her what he had heard or suspected, advised her to rest awhile, and then went out with the servants. They returned disappointed. He told Esther he would not leave the house that night, as she was not well. At a late hour, all being still abroad, they retired to rest; and Esther, worn with her distress, soon fell into a deep sleep.

Paul drew near the house once more, and watched till the last light was put out. — "The innocent and guilty both sleep, all but Paul! Not even the grave will be a resting-place for me! They hunt and drive me to the deed, and when 't is done, will snatch the abhorred soul to fires and tortures. Why should I rest more? The bosom I slept sweetly on, — blissful dreams stealing over me, — the bosom that to my delighted soul seemed all fond and faithful, — why, what harboured in it? Lust and deceit, and sly, plotting thoughts, showing love where they most loathed. They stung me, — ay, in my sleep crept out upon me, and stung me, — poisoned my very soul, — hot, burning poisons! — Peace, peace, your promptings, you that put me to this deed; — drive me not mad! Am I not about it?"

He walked up cautiously to the door, and, taking a key from his pocket, unlocked it and went in. There was now a suspense of all feeling. He entered the parlour. His wife's shawl was hanging on the back of a chair; books in which he had read to her were lying on the table, and her work-table was near it, open. His eye

passed over them, but there was no emotion. He left the room, and ascended the stairs with a slow, soft step, stealing through his own house cautiously as a thief. He unlocked the door of his dressing-room, and passed on without noticing any part of it. His hand shook as he partly opened his wife's chamber-door. He listened; — all was still. He cast his eyes round, then entered and shut the door after him. He walked up by the side of her bed without turning his eyes towards it, and seated himself down upon it, by her. Then it was he dared to look on her, as she lay in all her beauty, wrapped in a sleep so gentle he could not hear her breathing. She looked as if an angel talked with her in her dreams. Her dark, glossy hair had fallen over her bright, fair neck and bosom, and the moonlight, striking through it, pencilled it in beautiful thready shadows on her.

Paul sat for a while with folded arms, looking down on her. His eyes moved not, and in his dark face was the unchanging hardness of stone. His mind appeared elsewhere. There was no longer feeling in him. He seemed waiting the order of some stern power. The command at last came. He laid his hand upon her heart, and felt its regular beat; then drew the knife from his bosom. Once more he laid his hand upon her heart; then put the point there. He pressed his eyes hard with one hand, and the knife sunk to the handle. There was a convulsive start and a groan. He looked on her. A flutter passed over her frame, and her filmy eyes opened on him once; but he was as senseless as the body that lay before him. The moon shone fully on the corpse and on him that sat by it, and the silent night went on. By and by, up came the sun in the hot, flushed sky, and sent his rays over them. Paul moved not, nor heeded the change. There was no noise, nor

motion. There were they two together, like two of the dead.

At last Esther's attendant, entering suddenly, saw the gloomy figure of Paul before her. She ran out with a cry of terrour, and in a moment the room was filled with servants. The old man came in, trembling. No tear was wrung from him, nor a groan: he bowed his head, as saying, It is done.

The alarm was given, and Frank, with the neighbours, went up to the chamber. Though the room was nearly full, not a sound was heard. The stillness seemed to spread over them all, from Paul and the dead. Frank and some others came near him, and stood before him; but he continued looking on his wife, as he sat with his crossed hands resting on his thigh, while that which had done the murder still held the bloody knife.

No one moved. At last they looked at each other, and one of them took Paul by the wrist. He turned his slow, heavy eye on them, as if asking who they were, and what they wanted. They instinctively shrunk back; and he who held his arm letting it go, it fell like a dead man's.

There was a movement near the door; and presently Abel stood directly before Paul, his hands drawn between his knees, his body distorted and writhing as with pain, the muscles of his face hard and twisted, and his features pinched, cold, and blue. There was a gleam and glitter, and something of a laugh, with anguish, too, in his crazed eye, as it flitted back and forth from Esther to Paul. At last Paul glanced upon him. At the sight of Abel he gave a shuddering start that shook the bed. He looked once more on his wife; his hair rose up, and eyes became wild.—"Esther!" he gasped

out, tossing up his arms as he threw himself forward. He struck the bed, and fell to the floor. Abel looked, and saw his face black with the rush of blood to the head; then giving a leap at which he nearly touched the ceiling, with a deafening shriek that rang through the house, darted out of the chamber, and, at a spring, reached the outer door.

They felt of Paul. — Life had left him.

Frank took the father from the room. Preparations were hastily made; and about the close of the day, Esther's body, followed by a few neighbours and friends, was carried to the grave. The place was not very far from the foot of the stony ridge. As they drew near it, the sun was going down, the sky clear, and of a bright, warm glow. Presently a figure was seen running and darting in crossing movements along the top of the ridge, leaping from point to point, more like a creature of the air than of the earth, for it hardly seemed to touch on anything. It was mad Abel. So swift and shooting were his motions, and so quickly did he leap and dance to and fro, that it appeared to the dazzled eye as if there were hundreds holding their revels in the air; and now and then a wild laugh reached the mourners, that seemed to come from out the still sky. When it was night, the men who had made Paul's grave, a little without the consecrated ground, came to the house, and taking up the body, moved off toward the place in which they were to lay it. — No bell tolled for the departed; no one followed to mourn over him, as he was laid in the ground away from man, or to hear the earth fall on his coffin, — that sound which makes us feel as if our living bodies, too, were crumbling into dust.

It had been a chilly night; and while the frost was

yet heavy on the grass, some of the neighbours went to wonder and moralize over Paul's grave. There appeared something singular upon it. They ventured timidly on, and found, lying across it, poor Abel. He was apparently dead; and some of the boldest took hold of him. He opened his eyes a little, and uttered a faint, weak cry. They dropped their hold; his limbs quivered and stretched out rigid, — then relaxed. His breath came once, broken and quick, — it was his last.

THE SON.

Thou art all obedience, love, and goodness.
I dare say that which thousand fathers cannot,
And that 's my precious comfort; never son
Was in the way of more celestial rising.

The Old Law.

THERE is no virtue without a characteristic beauty to render it particularly loved of the good, and to make the bad ashamed of their neglect of it. To do what is right argues superior taste, as well as morals; and those whose practice is evil have a certain feeling of inferiority in intellectual power and enjoyment, even where they take no concern for a principle. Doing well has something more in it than the mere fulfilling of a duty. It is a cause of a just sense of elevation of character; it clears and strengthens the spirits; it gives higher reaches of thought; it widens our benevolence, and makes the current of our peculiar affections strong and deep. Never yet was a sacrifice offered to a principle, that was not more than made up to us by self-approval, and the consideration of what our degradation would have been had we done otherwise. Certainly it is a pleasant and a wise thing, then, to follow what is right, even when we only go along with our affections, and take the easy way of the better propensities of our nature.

The world is sensible of these truths, let it act as it may. It is not because of his integrity alone that it relies on an honest man. It has more confidence in his judgement and wise conduct, in the long run, than in the schemes of those of greater intellect, who go at large without any landmarks of principle; so that virtue seems of a double nature, and to stand oftentimes in the place of what we call talents.

This reasoning, or rather feeling, of the world is right; for the honest and good man only falls in with the order of nature, which is grounded in truth, and will endure along with it. And such a hold upon the world has a man of this character, — even where he has not been called upon to make a sacrifice to a principle, or to take a stand against wrong, but has merely avoided running into vices, and suffered himself to be borne along by the delightful and kind affections of private life, and has found his pleasures in the duties of home, — that he is looked up to with respect, as well as regarded with kindness. We attach certain notions of refinement to his thoughts, and of depth to his sentiment; and the impression he makes on us is beautiful and peculiar. Although we may have nothing in particular to object to in other men, and though they may be very well in their way, still, while in his presence, they strike us as lacking something, we can hardly say what, — a certain sensitive delicacy of character and manner, wanting which, they affect us as more or less insensible, and even coarse.

No creature in the world has this character so finely marked in him as a respectful and affectionate son, — particularly in his relation to his mother. Every little attention he pays her is not only an expression of filial attachment, and a grateful acknowledgment of past

cares, but is an evidence, also, of a tenderness of disposition, which moves us the more, because not so much looked on as an essential property in a man's character as it is in the light of an added grace which is bestowed only upon a few. His regards do not appear like mere habits of duty, nor does his watchfulness of his mother's wishes seem like taught submission to her will. They are the native courtesies of a feeling mind, showing themselves amid stern virtues and masculine energies, like gleams of light on points of rocks. They are delightful as evidences of power yielding voluntary homage to the delicacy of the soul. The armed knee is bent, and the heart of the mailed man laid bare.

Feelings, that would seem to be at variance with each other, meet together and harmonize in the breast of a son. Every call of the mother which he answers to, and every act of submission which he performs, are not only so many acknowledgments of her authority, but so many instances, also, of kindness, and marks of protecting regard. The servant and defender, the child and guardian, are mingled in him. The world looks on him in this way; and to draw upon a man the confidence, the respect, and the love of the world, it is enough to say of him, He is a good Son.

"The sun not set yet, Thomas?" "Not quite, Sir. It blazes through the trees on the hill yonder, as if their branches were all on fire."

Arthur raised himself heavily forward, and, with his hat still over his brow, turned his glazed and dim eyes toward the setting sun. It was only the night before that he had heard his mother was ill, and could survive but a day or two. He had lived nearly apart from so-

ciety, and being a lad of a thoughtful, dreamy mind, had made a world to himself. His thoughts and feelings were so much in it, that, except in relation to his own home, there were the same vague notions in his brain concerning the state of things surrounding him, as we have of a foreign land.

The main feeling which this visionary world excited in him was love; and as with most at his time of life, his mind had formed for itself a being suited to its own fancies. This was the romance of life; and though men, with minds like his, oftentimes make imagination to stand in the place of real existence, and to take to itself as deep feeling and concern, yet in the domestic relations, which are so near, and usual, and private, they feel longer and more deeply than those do who look upon their homes as only a better part of the world which they belong to. Indeed, to an affectionate and good man of a visionary cast, like Arthur, home appears to be even something more than an earnest of the fulfilment of his secretly cherished hopes and wishes; its daily acts seem to prefigure what he is looking forward to, and, while idealized by him, to impart, in a sort, to his ideal both distinctness and substantiality.

Arthur's mother was peculiarly dear to him, in having a character so much like his own. For though the cares and attachments of life had long ago taken place of a fanciful existence in her, yet her natural turn of mind was strong enough to give to these something of the romance of her disposition. This had led to a more than usual openness and intimacy between him and his mother, and now brought to his remembrance the hours they had sat together by the fire-light, when he listened to her mild and melancholy voice, as she spoke

of what she had undergone at the loss of her parents and husband. Her gentle rebuke of his faults when a boy, her affectionate look of approval when he had done well, her care that he should be a just man, and her motherly anxiety lest the world should go hard with him, crowded into his mind, and he felt as if every worldly attachment was hereafter to be a vain thing to him.

He had passed the night before his journey between tumultuous grief and numb insensibility. Stepping into the carriage with a slow, weak motion, like one who was quitting his sick-chamber for the first time, he began his way homeward. As he lifted his eyes upward, the few stars that were here and there over the sky seemed to look down in pity, and shed a religious and healing light upon him. But they soon went out, one after another, and, as the last faded from his sight, it was as if something good and holy had forsaken him. The faint tint in the east soon became a ruddy glow, and the sun, shooting upward, burst over every living thing in full glory. The sight went to Arthur's sick heart, as if it were in mockery of his sorrow.

Leaning back in his carriage, with his hand over his eyes, he was carried along, hardly sensible it was day. The old servant, Thomas, who was sitting by his side, went on talking in a low, monotonous tone; but Arthur only heard something sounding in his ears, scarcely heeding that it was a human voice. He had a sense of wearisomeness from the motion of the carriage, but in all things else the day passed as a melancholy dream.

Almost the first words Arthur spoke were those I have mentioned. As he looked out upon the setting

sun, he shuddered and turned pale, for he knew the hill near him. As they wound round it, some peculiar old trees appeared; and he was in a few minutes in the midst of the scenery near his home. The river before him, reflecting the rich evening sky, looked as if poured out from a molten mine; and the birds, gathering in, were shooting across each other, bursting into short, gay notes, or singing their evening songs in the trees. It was a bitter thing to find all so bright and cheerful, and so near his own home too. His horses' hoofs struck upon the old wooden bridge. The sound went to his heart; for it was here his mother took her last leave of him, and blessed him.

As he passed through the village, there was a feeling of strangeness, that everything should be just as it was when he left it. An undefined thought floated in his mind, that his mother's state should produce a visible change in whatever he had been familiar with. But the boys were at their noisy games in the street, the laborers returning together from their work, and the old men sitting quietly at their doors. He concealed himself as well as he could, and bade Thomas hasten on.

As they drew near the house, the night was shutting in about it, and there was a melancholy, gusty sound in the trees. Arthur felt as if approaching his mother's tomb. He entered the parlour. There was the gloom and stillness of a deserted house. Presently he heard a slow, cautious step overhead. It was in his mother's chamber. His sister had seen him from the window. She hurried down, and threw her arms about her brother's neck, without uttering a word. As soon as he could speak, he asked, "Is she alive?" — he could not say, my mother. "She is sleeping," answered his sister "and must not know to-night that you are here;

she is too weak to bear it now." "I will go look at her, then, while she sleeps," said he, drawing his handkerchief from his face. His sister's sympathy had made him shed the first tears which had fallen from him that day, and he was more composed.

He entered the chamber with a deep and still awe upon him; and as he drew near his mother's bed-side, and looked on her pale, placid face, he scarcely dared breathe, lest he should disturb the secret communion that the soul was holding with the world into which it was soon to enter. His grief, in the loss which he was about to suffer, was forgotten in the feeling of a holy inspiration, and he was, as it were, in the midst of invisible spirits ascending and descending. His mother's lips moved slightly as she uttered an indistinct sound. He drew back, and his sister went near to her, and she spoke. It was the same gentle voice which he had known and felt from his childhood. The exaltation of his soul left him; he sank down, and his sorrow went over him like a flood.

The next day, as soon as his mother became composed enough to see him, Arthur went into her chamber. She stretched out her feeble hand, and turned toward him with a look that blessed him. It was the short struggle of a meek spirit. She covered her eyes with her hand, and the tears trickled down between her pale, thin fingers. As soon as she became tranquil, she spoke of the gratitude she felt at being spared to see him before she died.

"My dear mother," said Arthur. But he could not go on; his voice choked, and his eyes filled. "Do not be so afflicted, Arthur, at the loss of me. We are not to part for ever. Remember, too, how comfortable and happy you have made my days. Heaven, I am

sure, will bless so good a son as you have been to me. You will have that consolation, my son, which visits too few sons, perhaps, — you will be able to look back upon your conduct, not without pain only, but with a sacred joy. And think, hereafter, of the peace of mind you give me, now that I am about to die, in the thought that I am leaving your sister to your love and care. So long as you live, she will find you both father and brother to her." She paused for a moment. "I have long felt that I could meet death with composure; but I did not know, — I did not know, till now that the hour is come, how hard a thing it would be to leave my children."

After a little while she spoke of his father, and said she had lived in the belief that he was mindful of her, and with the conviction, which grew stronger as death approached, that she should meet him in another world. She spoke but little more, as she grew weaker and weaker every hour. Arthur sat by in silence, holding her hand. He saw that she was sensible he was watching her countenance, for every now and then she opened her eyes upon him, and tried to smile.

The day wore slowly away; the sun went down, and the still twilight came on; while nothing was heard but the ticking of the watch, telling him, with a resistless power, that the hour was drawing nigh.

It was now quite dark, and by the pale light of the night-lamp in the chimney-corner, the furniture in the room threw huge and uncouth figures over the walls. All was unsubstantial; and the shadowy ministers of death appeared gathering round, waiting the duty of the hour appointed them. Arthur shuddered for a moment with superstitious awe; but the solemn elevation which a good man feels at the sight of the dying took possession of him, and he became calm again.

The approach of death has so much which is exalting, that our grief seems for the time suspended. And could one, who had seen Arthur a few hours before, now have looked upon the grave and even grand repose of his countenance, he would hardly have known him.

The hue of death was fast spreading over his mother's face. He stooped forward to catch the sound of her breathing. It grew quick and faint. — "My mother." — She opened her eyes for the last time upon him, and a faint flush passed over her cheek, — there was the serenity of an angel in her look. Her hand just pressed his: — It was all over.

His spirit had endured to its utmost; it sank down from its unearthly height; and with his face upon his mother's pillow, he wept like a child. — He arose with a softened grief, and, stepping into an adjoining chamber, spoke to his aunt. "It is past," said he. "Is my sister asleep? — Well, be it so: let her have rest; she needs it." He then went to his own chamber, and shut himself in.

It is a merciful thing that the suffering of sensitive minds makes to itself a relief. Violent grief brings on a torpor and indistinctness, as from long watching. It is not till the violence of affliction has subsided, and gentle and soothing thoughts can find room to mix with our sorrow, and holy consolations can minister to us, that we are able to know fully our loss, and see clearly what has been torn away from our affections. It was so with Arthur. Unconnected thoughts, and melancholy but half-formed images, were floating in his mind, and now and then a gleam of light would pass through it, as if he had been in a troubled trance, and all was right again. His worn and tired feelings at last found rest in sleep.

It is an impression of which we cannot rid ourselves if we would, when sitting by the body of a friend, that he has still a consciousness of our presence, — that, though he no longer has a concern in the common things of the world, love and thought are still there. The face which we had been familiar with so long, when it was all life and motion, seems only in a state of rest. We know not how to make it real to ourselves, that in the body before us there is not a something still alive.

Arthur was in such a state of mind, as he sat alone in the room by his mother, the day after her death. It was as if her soul was holding communion with spirits in paradise, though it still abode in the body that lay before him. He felt as if sanctified by the presence of one to whom the other world had been opened, — as if under the love and protection of one made holy. The religious reflections which his mother had early taught him gave him strength; a spiritual composure stole over him, and he found himself prepared to perform the last offices to the dead.

Is it not enough to see our friends die, and part with them for the rest of our days? — to reflect that we shall hear their voices no more, and that they will never look on us again? — to see that turning to corruption which was but just now alive, and eloquent, and beautiful with sensations? Are our sorrows so sacred and peculiar as to make the world as vanity to us, and the men of it as strangers, and shall we not be left to our afflictions for a few hours? Must we be brought out at such a time to the concerned or careless gaze of those we know not, or be made to bear the formal proffers of consolation from acquaintance who will go away and forget it all? Shall we not be suffered, for a

little while, private and healing communion with the dead? Must the kindred stillness and gloom of our dwelling be changed for the show of the pall, the talk of the passers-by, and the broad and piercing light of the common sun? Must the ceremonies of the world wait on us, even to our friends' open graves?

When the hour came, Arthur rose with a firm step and fixed eye, though his face was tremulous with the struggle within him. He went to his sister, and took her arm within his. The bell struck. Its heavy, undulating sound rolled forward like a sea. He felt a beating through his frame, which shook him so that he reeled. It was but a momentary weakness. He moved on, passing those who surrounded him as if they had been shadows. While he followed the slow hearse, there was a vacancy in his eye, as it rested on the coffin, which showed him hardly conscious of what was before him. His spirit was with his mother's. As he reached the grave, he shrunk back and turned pale; but dropping his head upon his breast, and covering his face, he stood motionless as a statue till the service was over.

He had gone through all that the debt to society required of him. For painful as it was, and ill suited to one of his reserved nature and holding such opinions upon the subject, still he could not do anything that might appear to the world like a want of reverence and respect for his mother. The scene was ended, and the inward struggle over; and now that he was left to himself, the greatness of his loss came up full and distinctly before him.

It was a gloomy and chilly evening when he returned home. As he entered the house from which his mother had gone for ever, a sense of dreary emptiness

oppressed him, as if his abode had been deserted by every living thing. He walked into his mother's chamber. The naked bedstead, and the chair in which she used to sit, were all that were left in the room. As he threw himself back into the chair, he groaned in the bitterness of his spirit. A feeling of forlornness came over him, which was not to be relieved by tears. She, whom he watched over in her dying hour, and whom he had talked to as she lay before him in death as if she could hear and answer him, had gone from him. Nothing was left for the senses to fasten fondly on, and time had not yet taught him to think of her only as a spirit. But time and holy endeavours brought this consolation; and the little of life that a wasting disease left him was passed by him, when alone, in thoughtful tranquillity; and among his friends he appeared with that gentle cheerfulness which, before his mother's death, had been a part of his nature.

KEAN'S ACTING.

For, doubtless, that indeed according to art is most eloquent, which turns and approaches nearest to nature, from whence it came.

MILTON.

Professed diversions! cannot these escape?

. . . . . .

We ransack tombs for *pastime;* from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement: How like Gods
We sit; and, wrapt in immortality,
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die;
Their fate deploring, to forget *our own!*

YOUNG.

IN looking over the following article, published when Kean was in this country, the lines which I have quoted from Young were brought forcibly to my mind. There was something painful to me in my own words, which speak of him as living and acting; for the curtain is, indeed, dropped now; and many, who heard and saw him then, have gone to their graves, too. It is startling to have our thoughts follow into eternity a man of genius and fiery passions; for there needs must be an intensity of Life there, which will make this world's existence seem to us, as we look back upon it, little more than a dream of life, — a beginning to be.

What a sad reflection upon our nature it is, that an

amusement so intellectual in its character as seeing a play, and capable of being made to administer so much to our intellectual and moral state, should be so tainted, — that the theatre should be a place where congregate licentious appetites and passions, and from which is breathed out so foul an atmosphere! Such as it is, I am now done with it. I would sooner forego the intellectual pleasure I might receive from another Kean, (were there ever to be another Kean,) than give countenance to vice, by going where infecting and open corruption sits, side by side, with the seemly.

It is not to read a lecture to others, but that I might not appear to approve of what I disapprove, that I have written these few lines; preferring to do so, to introducing any essential change into the main article, for the sake of adapting it to my present views.*

I HAD scarcely thought of the theatre for some years, when Kean arrived in this country; and it was more from curiosity than from any other motive, that I went to see, for the first time, the great actor of the age. I was soon lost to the recollection of being in a theatre, or looking upon a great display of the "mimic art." The simplicity, earnestness, and sincerity of his acting made me forgetful of the fiction, and bore me away with the power of reality and truth. If this be acting, said I, as I returned home, I may as well make the theatre my school, and henceforward study nature at second hand.

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* Since the above was first published, a reform has been effected in and around some of our theatres, which, it is to be hoped, will become general, and remove this objection to the most intellectual of public amusements.

How can I describe one who is almost as full of beauties as nature itself, — who grows upon us the more we become acquainted with him, and makes us sensible that the first time we saw him in any part, however much he may have moved us, we had but a partial apprehension of the many excellences of his acting? We cease to consider it as a mere amusement. It is an intellectual feast; and he who goes to it with a disposition and capacity to relish it, will receive from it more nourishment for his mind, than he would be likely to do in many other ways in twice the time. Our faculties are opened and enlivened by it; our reflections and recollections are of an elevated kind; and the voice which is sounding in our ears, long after we have left him, creates an inward harmony which is for our good.

Kean, in truth, stands very much in that relation to other players whom we have seen, that Shakspeare does to other dramatists. One player is called classical; another makes fine points here, and another there; Kean makes more fine points than all of them together; but in him these are only little prominences, showing their bright heads above a beautifully undulated surface. A continual change is going on in him, partaking of the nature of the varying scenes he is passing through, and the many thoughts and feelings which are shifting within him.

In a clear autumnal day we may see, here and there, a massed white cloud edged with a blazing brightness against a blue sky, and now and then a dark pine swinging its top in the wind, with the melancholy sound of the sea; but who can note the shifting and untiring play of the leaves of the wood, and their passing hues, when each seems a living thing full of sensa-

tions, and happy in its rich attire? A sound, too, of universal harmony is in our ears, and a wide-spread beauty before our eyes, which we cannot define; yet a joy is in our hearts. Our delight increases in these, day after day, the longer we give ourselves to them, till at last we become, as it were, a part of the existence without us. So it is with natural characters. They grow upon us imperceptibly, till we become bound up in them, we scarce know when or how. So, in its degree, it will fare with the actor who is deeply filled with nature, and is perpetually throwing off her beautiful evanescences. Instead of becoming tired of him, as we do, after a time, of others, he will go on giving something which will be new to the observing mind, and will keep the feelings alive, because their action will be natural. I have no doubt, that, excepting those who go to a play as children look into a show-box, to admire and exclaim at distorted figures, and raw, unharmonious colours, there is no man of a moderately warm temperament, and with a tolerable share of insight into human nature, who would not find his interest in Kean increasing with a study of him. It is very possible that the excitement would lessen, but there would be a quieter pleasure, instead of it, stealing upon him, as he became familiar with the character of the acting.

Taken within his range of characters, the versatility of his playing is striking. He seems not the same being, now representing Richard, and, again, Hamlet; but the two characters alone appear before you, and as distinct individuals who had never known or heard of each other. So does he become the character he is to represent, that we have sometimes thought it a reason why he was not universally better liked here,

in Richard; and that because the player did not make *himself* a little more visible, he must needs bear a share of our dislike of the cruel king. And this may be still more the case, as his construction of the character, whether right or wrong, creates in us an unmixed dislike of Richard, till the anguish of his mind makes him the object of pity; from which time, to the close, all allow that he plays the part better than any one has done before him.

In his highest-wrought passion, when the limbs and muscles are alive and quivering, and his gestures hurried and vehement, nothing appears ranted or overacted; because he makes us feel, that, with all this, there is something still within him struggling for utterance. The very breaking and harshness of his voice, in these parts, help to this impression, and make up, in a good degree, for this defect, if it be a defect here.

Though he is on the very verge of truth in his passionate parts, he does not fall into extravagance; but runs along the dizzy edge of the roaring and beating sea, with feet as sure as we walk our parlours. We feel that he is safe, for some preternatural spirit upholds him as it hurries him onward; and while all is uptorn and tossing in the whirl of the passions, we see that there is a power and order over the whole.

A man has feelings sometimes which can only be breathed out; there is no utterance for them in words. I had hardly written this when the terrible "Ha!" with which Kean makes Lear hail Cornwall and Regan as they enter in the fourth scene of the second act, came to my mind. That cry seemed at the time to take me up and sweep me along in its wild swell. No description in the world could give a tolerably clear notion of it;—it must be formed, as well as it may be, from what is here said of its effect.

Kean's playing is sometimes but the outbreaking of inarticulate sounds; — the throttled struggle of rage, and the choking of grief, — the broken laugh of extreme suffering, when the mind is ready to deliver itself over to an insane joy, — the utterance of over-full love, which cannot and would not speak in express words, and that of wildering grief, which blanks all the faculties of man.

No other player whom I have heard has attempted these, except now and then; and should any one have made the trial in the various ways in which Kean gives them, probably he would have failed. Kean thrills us with them, as if they were wrung from him in his agony. They have not the appearance of study or artifice. The truth is, that the labour of a mind of his genius constitutes its existence and delight. It is not like the toil of ordinary men at their task-work. What shows effort in them comes from him with the freedom and force of nature.

Some object to the frequent use of such sounds, and to others they are quite shocking. But those who permit themselves to consider that there are really violent passions in man's nature, and that they utter themselves a little differently from our ordinary feelings, understand and feel their language as they speak to us in Kean. Probably no actor has conceived passion with the intenseness and life that he does. It seems to enter into him and possess him, as evil spirits possessed men of old. It is curious to observe how some, who have sat very contentedly, year after year, and called the face-making, which they have seen, expression, and the stage-stride, dignity, and the noisy declamation, and all the rhodomontade of acting, energy and passion, complain that Kean is apt to be extravagant;

when in truth he seems to be little more than a simple personation of the feeling or passion to be expressed at the time.

It has been so common a saying, that Lear is the most difficult of characters to personate, that we had taken it for granted no man could play it so as to satisfy us. Perhaps it is the hardest to represent. Yet the part which has generally been supposed the most difficult, the insanity of Lear, is scarcely more so than that of the choleric old king. Inefficient rage is almost always ridiculous; and an old man, with a broken-down body and a mind falling in pieces from the violence of its uncontrolled passions, is in constant danger of exciting, along with our pity, a feeling of contempt. It is a chance matter to which we may be most moved. And this it is which makes the opening of Lear so difficult.

We may as well notice here the objection which some make to the abrupt violence with which Kean begins in Lear. If this be a fault, it is Shakspeare, and not Kean, who is to blame; for, no doubt, he has conceived it according to his author. Perhaps, however, the mistake lies in this case, where it does in most others, with those who put themselves into the seat of judgement to pass upon great men.

In most instances, Shakspeare has given us the gradual growth of a passion, with such little accompaniments as agree with it, and go to make up the whole man. In Lear, his object being to represent the beginning and course of insanity, he has properly enough gone but a little back of it, and introduced to us an old man of good feelings enough, but one who had lived without any true principle of conduct, and whose unruled passions had grown strong with age, and

were ready, upon a disappointment, to make shipwreck of an intellect never strong. To bring this about, he begins with an abruptness rather unusual; and the old king rushes in before us, with his passions at their height, and tearing him like fiends.

Kean gives this as soon as the fitting occasion offers itself. Had he put more of melancholy and depression and less of rage into the character, we should have been much puzzled at his so suddenly going mad. It would have required the change to have been slower; and besides, his insanity must have been of another kind. It must have been monotonous and complaining, instead of continually varying; at one time full of grief, at another playful, and then wild as the winds that roared about him, and fiery and sharp as the lightning that shot by him. The truth with which he conceived this was not finer than his execution of it. Not for a moment, in his utmost violence, did he suffer the imbecility of the old man's anger to touch upon the ludicrous, when nothing but the justest conception and feeling of the character could have saved him from it.

It has been said that Lear is a study for one who would make himself acquainted with the workings of an insane mind. And it is hardly less true, that the acting of Kean was an embodying of these workings. His eye, when his senses are first forsaking him, giving an inquiring look at what he saw, as if all before him was undergoing a strange and bewildering change which confused his brain, — the wandering, lost motions of his hands, which seemed feeling for something familiar to them, on which they might take hold and be assured of a safe reality, — the under monotone of his voice, as if he was questioning his own being, and

what surrounded him, — the continuous, but slight, oscillating motion of the body, — all these expressed, with fearful truth, the bewildered state of a mind fast unsettling, and making vain and weak efforts to find its way back to its wonted reason. There was a childish, feeble gladness in the eye, and a half-piteous smile about the mouth, at times, which one could scarce look upon without tears. As the derangement increased upon him, his eye lost its notice of objects about him, wandering over things as if he saw them not, and fastening upon the creatures of his crazed brain. The helpless and delighted fondness with which he clings to Edgar, as an insane brother, is another instance of the justness of Kean's conceptions. Nor does he lose the air of insanity, even in the fine moralizing parts, and where he inveighs against the corruptions of the world. There is a madness even in his reason.

The violent and immediate changes of the passions in Lear, so difficult to manage without jarring upon us, are given by Kean with a spirit and with a fitness to nature which we had hardly thought possible. These are equally well done both before and after the loss of reason. The most difficult scene, in this respect, is the last interview between Lear and his daughters, Goneril and Regan, — (and how wonderfully does Kean carry it through!) — the scene which ends with the horrid shout and cry with which he runs out mad from their presence, as if the very brain had taken fire.

The last scene which we are allowed to have of Shakspeare's Lear, for the simply pathetic, was played by Kean with unmatched power. We sink down helpless under the oppressive grief. It lies like a dead weight upon our hearts. We are denied even the relief of tears; and are thankful for the shudder that

seizes us when he kneels to his daughter in the deploring weakness of his crazed grief.

It is lamentable that Kean should not be allowed to show his unequalled powers in the last scene of Lear, as Shakspeare wrote it; and that this mighty work of genius should be profaned by the miserable, mawkish sort of by-play of Edgar's and Cordelia's loves. Nothing can surpass the impertinence of the man who made the change, but the folly of those who sanctioned it.

When I began, I had no other intention than that of giving a few general impressions made upon me by Kean's acting; but, falling accidentally upon his Lear, I have been led, unawares, into particulars. It is only to take these as some of the instances of his powers in Lear, and then to think of him as not inferiour in his other characters, and some notion may be formed of the effect of Kean's playing upon those who understand and like him. Neither this, nor anything I might add, would be likely to reach his great and various powers.

If it could be said of any one, it might be said of Kean, that he does not fall behind his author, but stands forward, the living representative of the character he has drawn. When he is not playing in Shakspeare, he fills up where his author is wanting; and when in Shakspeare, he gives not only what is set down, but whatever the situation and circumstances attendant upon the being he personates would naturally call forth. He seems, at the time, to have possessed himself of Shakspeare's imagination, and to have given it body and form. Read any scene in Shakspeare, — for instance, the last of Lear that is played, — and see

how few words are there set down, and then remember how Kean fills it out with varied and multiplied expression and circumstances, and the truth of this remark will be obvious enough. There are few men, I believe, let them have studied the plays of Shakspeare ever so attentively, who can see Kean in them without confessing that he has helped them to a truer and fuller conception of the author, notwithstanding what their own labours had done for them.

It is not easy to say in what character Kean plays best. He so fits himself to each in turn, that if the effect he produces at one time is less than at another, it is because of some inferiority in stage-effect in the character. Othello is probably the character best adapted to stage-effect, and Kean has an uninterrupted power over us in playing it. When he commands, we are awed; when his face is sensitive with love, and love thrills in his soft tones, all that our imaginations had pictured to us is realized. His jealousy, his hate, his fixed purposes, are terrific and deadly; and the groans wrung from him in his grief have the pathos and anguish of Esau's, when he stood before his old, blind father, and sent up "an exceeding bitter cry."

Again, in Richard, how does he hurry forward to his object, sweeping away all between him and it! The world and its affairs are nothing to him, till he gains his end. He is all life, and action, and haste, — he fills every part of the stage, and seems to do all that is done.

I have before said that his voice is harsh and breaking in his high tones, in his rage, but that this defect is of little consequence in such places. Nor is it well suited to the more declamatory parts. This, again, is scarce worth considering; for how very little is there of

mere declamation in good English plays! But it is one of the finest voices in the world for all the passions and feelings which can be uttered in the middle and lower tones. In Lear, —

"If you have poison for me, I will drink it."

And again, —

"You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave.
Thou art a soul in bliss."

Why should I cite passages? Can any man open upon the scene in which these are contained, without Kean's piteous looks and tones being present to him? And does not the mere remembrance of them, as he reads, bring tears into his eyes? Yet, once more, in Othello, —

"Had it pleased Heaven
To try me with affliction," &c.

In the passage beginning with

"O, now for ever
Farewell the tranquil mind," —

there was "a mysterious confluence of sounds" passing off into infinite distance, and every thought and feeling within him seemed travelling with them.

How graceful he is in Othello! It is not a practised, educated grace, but the "unbought grace" of his genius, uttering itself in its beauty and grandeur in the movements of the outward man. When he says to Iago so touchingly, "Leave me, leave me, Iago," and, turning from him, walks to the back of the stage, raising his hands, and bringing them down upon his head, with clasped fingers, and stands thus with his back to us, there is a grace and majesty in his figure which we look on with admiration.

Talking of these things in Kean is something like reading the "Beauties of Shakspeare"; for he is as

true in the subordinate as in the great parts. But he must be content to share with other men of genius, and think himself fortunate if one in a hundred sees his lesser beauties, and marks the truth and delicacy of his under-playing. For instance, when he has no share in the action going on, he is not busy in putting himself into attitudes to draw attention, but stands or sits in a simple posture, like one with an engaged mind. His countenance, too, is in a state of ordinary repose, with but a slight, general expression of the character of his thoughts; for this is all the face shows, when the mind is taken up in silence with its own reflections. It does not assume marked or violent expressions, as in soliloquy. When a man gives utterance to his thoughts, though alone, the charmed rest of the body is broken; he speaks in his gestures too, and the countenance is put into a sympathizing action.

I was first struck with this in his Hamlet; for the deep and quiet interest, so marked in Hamlet, made the justness of Kean's playing, in this respect, the more obvious. And since then, I have observed him attentively, and have found the same true acting in his other characters.

This right conception of situation and its general effect seems to require almost as much genius as his conceptions of his characters, and, indeed, may be considered as one with them. He deserves praise for it; for there is so much of the subtilty of nature in it, if one may so speak, that while a few are able, with his help, to put themselves into the situation, and perceive the justness of his acting in it, the rest, both those who like him upon the whole, as well as those who profess to see little in him, will be apt to let it pass by without observing it.

Like most men, however, Kean receives a partial reward, at least, for his sacrifice of the praise of the many to what he feels to be the truth. For when he passes from the state of natural repose, even into that of gentle motion and ordinary discourse, he is immediately filled with a spirit and life, which he makes every one feel who is not armour-proof against him. This helps to the sparkling brightness and warmth of his playing, the grand secret of which, like that of colours in a picture, lies in a just contrast. We can all speculate concerning the general rules upon this; but when the man of genius gives us their results, how few are there who can trace them out with an observant eye, or look with a discerning satisfaction upon the great whole. Perhaps this very beauty in Kean has helped to an opinion, which, no doubt, is true, that he is, at times, too sharp and abrupt. I well remember, while once looking at a picture in which the shadow of a mountain fell, in strong outline, upon a part of a stream, I overheard some quite sensible people expressing their wonder that the artist should have made the water of two colours, seeing it was all one and the same thing.

Instances of Kean's keeping of situations were striking in the opening of the trial scene in The Iron Chest, and in Hamlet, when the father's ghost tells the story of his death.

The composure to which he is bent up, in the former, must be present with all who saw him. And, though from the immediate purpose, shall I pass by the startling and appalling change, when madness seized upon his brain, with the swiftness and power of a fanged monster? Wonderfully as this last part was played, we cannot well imagine how much the previous calm,

and the suddenness of the unlooked-for change from it, added to the terrour of the scene. The temple stood fixed on its foundations; the earthquake shook it, and it was a heap. Is this one of Kean's violent contrasts?

While Kean listened, in Hamlet, to the father's story, the entire man was absorbed in deep attention, mingled with a tempered awe. His posture was simple, with a slight inclination forward. The spirit was the spirit of his father, whom he had loved and reverenced, and who was to that moment ever present in his thoughts. The first superstitious terrour at meeting him had passed off. The account of his father's appearance given him by Horatio and the watch, and his having followed him some distance, had, in a degree, familiarized him to the sight, and he stood before us in the stillness of one who was to hear, then or never, what was to be told, but without that eager reaching forward which other players give, and which would be right, perhaps, in any character but that of Hamlet, who connects the past and what is to come with the present, and mingles reflection with his immediate feelings, however deep.

As an instance of Kean's familiar, and, if I may be allowed the term, domestic acting, the first scene in the fourth act of his Sir Giles Overreach may be taken. His manner at meeting Lovell and through the conversation with him, the way in which he turns his chair and leans upon it, were as easy and natural as they could have been in real life, had Sir Giles been actually existing, and engaged at that moment in conversation in Lovell's room.

It is in these things, scarcely less than in the more prominent parts of his playing, that Kean shows him-

self the great actor. He must always make a deep impression; but to suppose the world at large capable of a right estimate of his different powers, would be forming a judgement against every-day proof. The gradual manner in which the character of his playing has opened upon me satisfies me, that in acting, as in everything else, however deep may be the first effect of genius upon us, we come slowly, and through study, to a perception of its minute beauties and delicate characteristics. After all, the greater part of men seldom get beyond the first general impression.

As there must needs go a *modicum* of fault-finding along with commendation, it may be well to remark, that Kean plays his hands too much at times, and moves about the dress over his breast and neck too frequently in his hurried and impatient passages, and that he does not always adhere with sufficient accuracy to the received readings of Shakspeare, and that the effect would be greater, upon the whole, were he to be more sparing of sudden changes from violent voice and gesticulation to a low conversation-tone and subdued manner.

His frequent use of these in Sir Giles Overreach is with good effect, for Sir Giles is playing his part; so, too, in Lear, for Lear's passions are gusty and shifting; but, in the main, it is a kind of playing too marked and striking to bear so frequent repetition, and had better sometimes be spared, where, considered alone, it might be properly enough used, for the sake of bringing it in at some other place with greater effect.

It is well to speak of these defects, for though the little faults of genius, in themselves considered, but slightly affect those who can enter into its true character, yet such persons are made impatient at the

thought, that an opportunity is given those to carp who know not how to commend.

Though I have taken up a good deal of room, I must end without speaking of many things which occur to me. Some will be of the opinion that I have already said enough. Thinking of Kean as I do, I could not honestly have said less; for I hold it to be a low and wicked thing to keep back from merit of any kind its due, — and, with Steele, that "there is something wonderful in the narrowness of those minds which can be pleased, and be barren of bounty to those who please them."

Although the self-important, out of self-concern, give praise sparingly, and the mean measure theirs by their likings or dislikings of a man, and the good even are often slow to allow the talents of the faulty their due, lest they bring the evil into repute; yet it is the wiser as well as the honester course, not to disparage an excellence because it neighbours upon a fault, nor to take away from another what is his of right, with a view to our own name, nor to rest our character for discernment upon the promptings of an unkind heart. Where God has not feared to bestow great powers, we may not fear giving them their due; nor need we be parsimonious of commendation, as if there were but a certain quantity for distribution, and our liberality would be to our loss; nor should we hold it safe to detract from another's merit, as if we could always keep the world blind, lest we live to see him whom we disparaged, praised, and whom we hated, loved.

Whatever be his failings, give every man a full and ready commendation for that in which he excels; it will do good to our own hearts, while it cheers his. Nor will it bring our judgement into question with

the discerning; for enthusiasm for what is great does not argue such an unhappy want of discrimination as that measured and cold approval, which is bestowed alike upon men of mediocrity and upon those of gifted minds.

A LETTER FROM TOWN.

Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?

SHAKSPEARE.

If your concern for pleasing others arises from innate benevolence, it never fails of success; if from vanity to excel, its disappointment is no less certain.

m m m . . . . . .

In a word, good-breeding shows itself most, where, to an ordinary eye, it appears the least.

THE SPECTATOR.

MY DEAR FRIEND, —

When I left you and the country for the city, I promised to send you a portion of what I might gather up here in the course of my walks, business, and visitings; and I now take the first odd moment of composure that I have been blessed with since reaching this bustling city. I say of composure; for though I am naturally of a steady disposition, as you well know, you can hardly conceive what a whirligig town-life makes of a quiet country-gentleman, like myself. Where I see that men have a clear apprehension of their purpose, it never jars the even motions of my mind, however varied and great the action around me may be; and for the very simple reason, I suppose, that wherever there is a distinct purpose, however rapid and complicated the movements, there will be

conducive order. But where men are kept in a perpetual spin-round from a mere accidental and hurried touch-and-go meeting with one another, I myself, sky, earth, and all upon it, get into a whirl, and I find myself fast undergoing the general metamorphosis, and becoming, like every one around me, a humming-top. Yes, my dear friend, you have heard a great deal about the city and about its inhabitants; — they are all humming-tops; and the best of it is, they are all humming one another. But as I have just spun out my turn, and am at present lying still on my side, I will endeavour to do as those do who think to make amends for spending the greater part of life in a round of folly, by being wise and moralizing upon it, for the little time they are in their senses.

You were a great reader of Doctor Johnson in your younger days; and though you quarrelled with many of his criticisms, your admiration of that great man was less qualified, I believe, than it is now. I cannot say that time has had the same abating influence respecting him upon me. He is no less frequently in my thoughts than formerly. To this circumstance you must consider yourself indebted for the subject of the present letter, and thank the Doctor for whatever may please you in it; for I seldom think of him without calling to mind his love of an inn; it is one of the easy-natured traits of his character.

There certainly is no place in the world where a man feels so independent and easy, and so inclined to take clear comfort. It is equally well fitted to nearly all sorts of characters. The blackguard goes to it to lord it over his own gang, put the host in good humour, have full swing amongst the waiters, and sharpen his wits upon the comers-in. He visits it nightly,

as much for his improvement in his calling as for his pleasure; and goes home as satisfied, when he has done well, as those who have finished more serious duties with duller heads. The humourist may have his own way there, and the surly man keep his corner, and pass himself off for one of grave taciturnity. In short, nowhere else can so various and opposite dispositions herd together, with so little annoyance to each other.

It is the world in little. Men of all sizes, complexions, and callings are as close stowed as beasts in a cattle-show, and give as good opportunity to observe their points and varieties. Here you meet politicians, who never had place or pension, with plans to keep order without law; beaux in rusty hats and coats white in the shoulders; gray-headed midshipmen who could "sink a navy"; Laputa philosophers; henpecked husbands, venting their lungs and spiriting up their courage; quiet, staid bachelors, who eat and drink by weight and measure, and sleep by the clock; the dapper gentleman, in the unsoiled suit, fresh and smooth as a ladies' man; and your swaggerer, always dirty, and always rude. Besides these, and many more in contrast, come the fillers-up of society, your ordinary men, with differences so faintly marked that it is quite a science, and an ill-paid one, to trace them out.

One who wishes to study his fellow-men may study here, and save himself a deal of travel. He has nothing to do but to take his seat snugly in a corner, and look and listen, and now and then throw in a remark in way of suggestion, just to see what it will come to. — Out of doubt, it is a situation well fitted to that sort of men who keep about in society for the sole purpose of speculating upon human nature. Here they are

most likely to find people off their guard; and they themselves are not kept back by the restraints of ceremony.

One of these observers will enter a room of motley company, with a grave, downward aspect, and pace it to and fro with a measured step, as if lost in abstraction, or busy about some embarrassing question. If you watch him narrowly, however, you will presently catch his eye scaling along over the group of talkers you are standing amongst, as if he were taking note of each one in the circle.

I dined out to-day, and told our old friend, Thomson, I would meet him at the tavern, that he might take me to his club more conveniently. It was a raw night after a warm day, a time, of all others, when a fire is most cheering. Each one drew near the inn fire with open hands; and rubbing them together in a self-congratulatory way, with a working of the shoulders and a backward throw of the head, was prepared for a set-to at a long talk upon whatever might be going on.

I was sitting in an old round-about which stood in a corner, waiting the coming of my friend, without taking part in the conversation, when a person like the one I have just before described walked slowly into the room. He was past middle age, and his tailor was probably as old as himself, for his dark drab coat was of the fashion of some twenty years back. There was a staidness in his manner, as much out of fashion as the cut of his clothes, but suiting well with the strong sagacity of his countenance. The nose and the lines from it expressed sarcasm, which was tempered, however, by playful good-nature about the lips; and his eyes had that look of inward contemplation, which makes the finest eyes in the world. For the most part,

there was a rich haze over them; but when they turned their notice outward, they sent forth rays, like the sun breaking through a mist.

The expression of his eyes and mouth led me to observe him more closely, and with a good degree of interest. For it is not often that we meet with men who pass much of their time in society, only because of a certain talent at discriminating and observing, who have not hard, self-pleased countenances, showing that sort of sporting with the weaknesses of our kind which no good man can take a share in. Yet they make smooth way through the world. It is ten to one that he whom they next meet with is glad of a laugh with them, though at another's cost, beside feeling safe and in favour while under the wing of one of these world-wits. They know full well, too, that few men are brave enough to go to war with ridicule, and that as few will put themselves at risk for a general principle.

An habitual, close observation of the customs, manners, and characters of society will beget in even the best men a relish for the ridiculous. It is past question that a common-sense man, who stands by and sees how much folly is wrapped snugly up in ceremony, how much pretence covers indifference, and how far, even among the knowing, the conventional passes current for the true, must have a scorn of the foppery with which the plain fact of life is so fantastically tricked out.

He, then, who has lived long among men as a looker-on, and has kept his exhorting from turning to irony, and his earnestness to indifference, has given a thousand-fold better proof of sound principle and a thoroughly good heart, than he who, in a fancied benevolence, while apart from the world, sees nothing but the growth of virtue, and exalts himself in lauding his spe-

cies. Even a little taunting of the world may go with a right love of it, and he may be humble under his own infirmities who rebukes another's; else, who would be our censors but the unkind, or our teachers but the proud? In a benevolent heart, our very frailties beget an anxiety which quickens and fills out the growth of the affections; and the keen-sighted to our faults are not always those who love us least, or are most blind to our virtues.

These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind while I was looking upon the shrewd, sarcastic, benevolent face before me. The honest owner of it soon saw that I was observing him; and, whether it was that he perceived an expression in mine that pleased him or that he was inclined to sift me I cannot tell,—(I rather think there was a sympathy between us,)—after traversing the room once or twice more, he made his way next to me into the circle. Taking up the poker, and passing it between the bars in the same deliberate manner as Vicar Primrose did, when about upsetting his daughters' washes, "What companionable, talkative creatures a brisk fire makes folks of a dull day!" said he. This was spoken in that low tone, and half soliloquizing manner, in which one utters himself, who wishes to bring on a conversation with his next neighbour, yet does not feel at liberty to do it by way of direct address, and so throws out a remark for him to take up or not, as he pleases.

"Yes," I replied, turning toward the fire, too; "they cluster together with spirits as much astir as flies on the sunny side of a tree of a frosty morning."

Putting down the poker and straightening himself up, he looked at me with a sociable expression of face, as if we understood each other perfectly well, and,

drawing a chair into the circle, said, as he sat himself down by me, — "You are from the country, Sir, I presume?"

"I am so. I come to town, now and then, to see an old friend, and to give my faculties a jog in the crowd."

"Two very good reasons," he remarked. "And may I ask, without being impertinent, whether you have two more as good for making the country your home?"

"I prefer the country, inasmuch as a man sees there less of the frivolities of his species, and more of nature, than in town, and stands a better chance to have a more equable temper and a more independent turn of mind."

"True," he answered. "The flies you just now spoke of will never let a man into their little vanities, impertinencies, and enmities, however long he may stand, feeling his heart fill with gladness and good-will while looking on so much of the enjoyment which God gives to all creatures."

"That is from no want of honesty in them," said I. "They would not lie to us, could we understand their language. They do not keep two characters on hand, the one bad, the other good, like a man with his home coat and another for visiting. I could be tolerably well content with the world, bad as it is, would men but show themselves a little more plainly."

"The difficulty in knowing men arises, not only from a design in them to deceive us, but also from a proneness to deceive themselves. Now, look you round," said he, with a half good-natured, half sarcastic smile, as he gave a side-glance at the company, "upon any dozen of men you may happen amongst, and it is odds but you will find that ten of them have been all their

lives industriously making up for themselves false characters, have thrown away what belonged to them, and might have done good service, to put on that which perhaps was well enough in itself, but has become fantastical and absurd, because it fits ill and is out of place. This lost labour is sometimes from self-ignorance, but as often, to be sure, from want of thorough honesty. The best of us begin with cheating the world more or less, and end, for the most part, our own dupes."

"The world is perpetually struggling against nature," said I. "Who stops to consider, that individual peculiarities of mind and manner are not to be changed without making an inconsistency in the parts taken together?"

"You are right. Every man has, by nature, his peculiar manner, and certain modes of expression and motions of the body proper to himself. No one is, perhaps, free from little awkwardnesses, as they are called, of one kind or another. Now, though these may not be well in themselves, yet, considered in their relations, there is a fitness in them which makes them even agreeable to a discerning man. They are, in general, in harmony with the structure of the body, but, what is better, they are so many honest indications of a man's mind and disposition, which are continually coming from him, and laying his character open to us, without his observing them. They are, in some sort, a part of the very constitution of the being they belong to, and so intimately connected with his thoughts and feelings, that he will find it hard to rid himself of them without injuring the mind itself. He will be instantly put into a forced state by so doing, carrying on a double operation, and working under rule, for life.

For, after all, he will never be able to make it to himself so much a habit, as to forget his fashion of doing a thing in his concern for what he does. In this way, he will be putting teasing checks upon the free play of his ordinary feelings, and breaking up the simple movements of his impulses. And so he will lose his credit with the world even for the little sincerity that he has left to himself, and fail, in the end, of his effect, from his too great anxiety about it. My dear Sir," said he abruptly, "did you, for instance, ever see a perfectly graceful speaker, as the ladies would call him, without being heartily tired of him after twice or thrice hearing him?"

"No," answered I; "your elegant speakers are very much like your Blair writers; there is no fault to find with them, only that we are soon weary of them."

"They always affect me in the same way. Nor can I call to mind a man who has made himself felt after being heard many times, who, either from the too frequent repetition of some gesture proper enough in itself, perhaps, or from some odd one, has not set all rules of gesticulation at defiance. The most stirring speaker I ever heard was remarkable for a singular motion of the hand; yet it was natural to him, and produced an effect. To me it was *the man*, and I never remember it but as something pleasing, and free from anything of the ludicrous. One should take care how he new-models his manner; for unless he is peculiarly fortunate, the chance is that he will cast off what we could very well put up with, all the while fancying to himself that he is about delighting us with what, in truth, we shall never tolerate. A bad natural manner is bad enough, but a bad artificial one is abominable."

"There are certain ungainly tricks of the body," said

I, "generally, however, proceeding from an embarrassed mind; but the worst of them never make a man half so ridiculous as is the awkward man who puts himself to school to the graces. The most striking thing about the latter will be a stiff sort of motion, aiming at ease, and a clumsy endeavour after elegance. There are others, of a happy temperament and a suppleness of body, who undertake to refine upon what nature has done for them, and so part with that which made every one pleased and at home, — hardly knowing why, — to take up with obtrusive graces and impertinent grimace; and thus they turn their manners into forms and dresses, instead of leaving them the mere representatives of a polite, well-ordered mind."

"Very true; and if the mind is well improved, and right feelings brought out, what we call the manners will for the most part take care of themselves. Make it a child's main principle to love the truth and always hold to it, and he will have an open and manly decision of manner, which will clear his way for him wherever he goes. Give him a tasteful mind, and there will be beautiful emanations from it playing about him, even on ordinary occasions. Teach him that selfishness defeats its own purposes, and makes the most polite sometimes vulgar; that in common intercourse he is to be more mindful of others than of himself; that he is not to press hard his own tastes and opinions till they give uneasiness; that it is best to find out the bent of another's feelings, and not cross it except where it is at variance with a weighty truth; that he is rather to talk upon what his companions are familiar with, than unfeelingly to parade before their ignorance a show of what he himself knows; that, unless some occasion calls for it, he is not to keep ahead of those

he is with, instead of walking by their side; that his principal object should be to produce a good and happy state of things wherever he goes; and that in this way he will make sure his own satisfying enjoyments, without the mortifying sense of a selfish aim;—and you will do more, upon these few, simple principles, to make a thorough gentleman, than all the pedantry of polite education, than all the outside endeavours of the professors and scholars of elegant accomplishments, could ever teach or comprehend."

This may sound a little climacteric to you, my dear friend; but coming from a thoughtful man, past middle life, who had not lost his feelings with his hairs, it took hold of me from its simple earnestness; and more so, as I marked in his face the play of his feelings growing quicker as he went on, and a flush of excitement spreading gradually over his pale countenance.

He paused and looked down for a moment, as if sensible that his zeal had led him into something like an harangue, and to take more to himself than a well-bred man should ordinarily do, especially when with a stranger. The delicate embarrassment of his manner moved me a good deal, particularly when I considered that it was shown toward one so much younger than himself.

More to relieve him than from any wish to talk, (for I preferred listening,) I began saying something about the tiresome sameness of what is called high life in a city. He raised his head a little, and turning toward me with a smile, looked at me as if he thanked me. This put me off again from what I was about remarking; and I was never more glad than at seeing my friend Thomson coming in at the door to relieve me

from my uneasy sensations. There was something delightful in them, notwithstanding; and when my friend introduced me to the stranger as an old and particular acquaintance of his, and I took his extended hand, we were better known to each other than most of those who have lived next-door neighbours for some dozen years.

It was quite time to join the club. My new acquaintance turning out to be a member, as well as my friend, we walked in sociably together.

In my next, I hope to send you some account of the club; though this is quite uncertain, as the spirit of order bears as little rule over me at present as it does over the place I am in; besides, I may meet with something, if not more worthy of your attention, yet more amusing, perhaps.

Yours,

A. B.

A SECOND LETTER FROM TOWN.

Not moved a whit.
Constant to lightness still!
You 're for mirth,
Or I mistake you much.

MASSINGER.

Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone ——

SHAKSPEARE.

In the first letter which I wrote you from town, I spoke of our old friend's taking me with him to his club. As we went late, and a good part of the members could be seen but dimly through the cigar-smoke, I shall put off a general description of their persons, till I get a view of them in a clear atmosphere. Besides, while it is fresh in my mind, I wish to give you the latter part of a dialogue, which was going on as we entered, between a snug-built, well-dressed, fresh-looking man of about five-and-forty, and another of nearly the same age, I am told, — but apparently ten years older, — of a thin visage and spare frame, with an impatient hurry in his speech, followed by a whining drawl; and who, to set off his figure the better, I suppose, was clad in a mixed-gray suit with black buttons. He nestled about in his seat with a fidgety mo-

tion, and there was a nervous twitching of the eyelids, and a restlessness in the eye, though he was all the while looking at one object, very much as folks do when repeating from memory. The first gentleman, who seemed to have most of the talk to himself, was going on thus, as we drew near them: —

"There is no telling how large a pack of troubles a man may have upon his shoulders at the end of life, who keeps it always open like an alms-basket, and has no hole at bottom to let out a little of what he takes in. He need not ape a lame leg or a broken back. If he keeps his wallet stuffed with odd scraps of bad meat and mouldy bread, when he can get better, for the sake of groaning over his hard fare, he will go doubled and limping to his grave, in good earnest."

"A pleasant fellow, you, Tom, with a nosegay in your button-hole, and snuff between thumb and finger, who never found it too cold without-doors, nor too hot within. You go as gay as an ostrich, and with not a whit more thought."

"I 've done my part, Abraham, and it is my wife's duty to look at things at home, and to keep the children out of the fire, or cure them when they get in. Besides, I never saw any good come of too much care of the brats; it only makes them helpless. And if all 's at sixes and sevens at home, and my mate's voice and face grow sharp and angry, I come and take heart at the sound and sight of your clear voice and gay countenance, over a bottle of the best."

Abraham did not much like this taunt at his complainings; and his cheek began to kindle and grow redder in spots, the louder and longer Tom laughed. Tom seemed to care little for this, so it did but put a stop to the drone-pipe which Abraham was said to

play upon whenever he came to the club to have a merry night of it.

"No surer cure for our troubles, Abraham, than to get into a rousing passion; and you have not a better friend in the world than I, who am always helping you into one. Why, you would have gone all night like an ill-greased wheel, spoke following up and down after spoke to the melancholy creaking, had n't I vexed you. Now we shall see you in a fine whirl presently, striking fire out of every stone you hit against. Don't you remember how sad you were a half-score years ago, because the gout would n't carry off your uncle? and when it did the business for him, and took you softly by the toe, only to tell you of it, how woe-begone you looked, just as if your mourning suit was to be handed over to your man John to appear respectably in at his master's funeral? Yet you got here to-night without halting; and if you don't make your way home as quick as the rest of us, it will not be the gout that will hinder you."

Abraham had three charges to answer to, — his complaining disposition, his eagerness for his uncle's death, and an over-fondness for good wine. Now, whether it was his anger that made him take up the last word, as is generally the way with a man in a passion, or that the first two charges were not to be denied, Abraham chose to clear himself of the last, and to have his revenge on Tom, by railing against a weakness which he himself was kept from by at least as great failings. He knew the cost of his liquor, and that too much wine helped to rid him of his uncle, and Abraham was said to be both a miser and a coward.

"Have you no shame in you, Tom, that you will be talking of drinking? Don't you remember the

snake-track you made back the very last night you were here? And by the going of your clapper, and the shine of your eye, you bid fair to get home again the same way. When have you seen me make such a beast of myself as to hold up by my neighbour's knocker instead of my own? I set my children a better example, teach them to strive against temptation, and to keep a watch upon any besetting sin. I tell them that life is a state of trial and affliction; that if they have riches and blessings to-day, these may be all gone to-morrow; that though they are now in health, sickness is nigh at hand, and that death may overtake them at noonday; that they must learn temperance in all things, and never forget they are in the midst of evils. But what good will it do to tell you this? You never will have forethought; and though there is little else but pains and misfortunes in life, you go on as reckless of all as if harm could never come to you."

"There you are at your saws again! I tell you what, father Abraham, he 's a fool who is always busy making troubles for himself, when there is no danger but what he will have enough gratis. I've weathered more storms than will ever beat on your head, though I have not sat like an old crow foreboding them while the sun shines. To take you in your own way, I have not forgotten what I read when a boy, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' My creed is, 'To enjoy is to obey.' And I can say more than can be said for most such as you, I make my faith the rule of my conduct, and take care to act up to it. And if I do sometimes love my friends so much as to forget myself and be a little too merry with them, it stirs my blood, and I am all the better for it the next day. I lose no time by it, for it is done up at night; and if I

am not quite right, my children will have a warning in me at home, and not be obliged to pull their neighbours' characters to pieces to mend their own with. Besides, it is as well to have a failing or two to keep the world in good-humour with one; for nothing puts people out more than a man's being too good for them. And what would come of all my virtues, if they only made men enemies to me, and so to themselves?

"You talk about my children. Why, man, don't they owe their lives to me, and what's more, don't I teach them how to enjoy life? Would you have me moan over them all day, till they were as long-visaged as saints at conventicle? Stout-hearted, full-blooded lads! And you would have them crawling along as meek and pale as a Philadelphia patient after a semi-weekly slop-bleeding! Then, again, there's my wife: — but one purse between us and no questions asked. Rides or walks as she pleases; and not a word about cost." Here Abraham coloured. "I'm all attention; see her at parties abroad, and dine with her at home, — whenever there's company. She orders what suits her, and is undisputed mistress of the household. I'm pleased to see her in spirits; and if affairs go wrong, and she's in ill-humour, I take care not to put any restraint upon her by being in the way. I was here an hour earlier than usual to-night because the servant let fall the tea-tray and broke half a dozen tea-cups; and as I have missed my tea, — thank you, Sir, to fill my glass."

While he twirled a light, silver-headed cane in his right hand, he reached out his glass with his left, and I began filling it. At this critical moment the dry and sallow visage of Abraham caught my eye. Turned

partly round, and leaning forward, contrary to his custom, — for he seldom looked at the person he was talking with, — his eyes were fixed steadfastly upon the rattle-headed Tom, with that mixed expression of pity and imploring, with which one gazes upon a man that is going to be hanged. If Tom was just then to have been swung off, it could not have been more mournful. I was so intent upon the face of Abraham, that I forgot what I was about, till Tom, feeling the wine running over his hand, and moving suddenly, brought me to myself. Before I could mutter an apology, he caught the direction of my eye, and, turning towards Abraham, burst into a loud laugh. It was not to be withstood. Tom had broken the enchantment; and in spite of good breeding and good feeling, there was a roar of laughter through the room. This was too much even for Abraham; he sprang upon his feet, uttering something between a mutter and a curse, (he never dared swear outright,) and twitching down his hat, which had grown nap-worn and round-edged through use, and at the same time seizing his long, slender oak cane with something like a threatening motion, he darted out of the room.

As soon as he could speak, Tom cried out, — "I told him, a little while ago, that I was the best friend he had in the world, and I shall always prove so. By putting him into such a rage, he is off without paying his share of the reckoning. There need be no making up between us, for he will no sooner remember this, than he will forgive me from the bottom of his heart. Poor fellow, I pity him! Nobody ever set out with fairer prospects, or has had things more comfortable about him; and yet he is the most forlorn being alive. Did n't you hear him prose just now about his anxiety for his children? — while all his aim is to see that they

shall be no happier than himself; for he takes another's enjoyment as a reproach to his own self-made misery. And as to his care about their worldly estate, it is all because he feels their possessions will be, in a sort, his, even after death. For my part, I 'm content, when I die, to give up all my claims to those I leave behind me. And while I live, I mean to make them and myself as merry as we can well be."

With a rap upon his box, and shaking the snuff from between his fingers, Tom ended his moral lecture, and, with a well-satisfied nod, took himself off to wind up the night at another club, with a hand at whist. The rest of the company soon went out, one after another, without noise, like sparks upon burnt paper, leaving my old friend and me to finish a bottle.

Without thinking of it, we at the same moment drew up to within a companionable distance of each other; and, while carefully pouring a little, first into my glass and then into his, that we might share alike till the bottle was drained, he began, in that same composed manner and low voice which were familiar to me some years ago, by saying, "Though Tom's last remarks may sound harsh in the extreme to you, yet I fear that there is too much truth in them. I knew Abraham when he was a child. He was then a spare lad, with a wrinkled brow, and weak, anxious voice. As he was feeble, his mother nursed him up with caudles and a tippet, bade him never wet his feet, and taught him that it was a sin to soil his clothes. Thinking him not fit to push his way in the world, and knowing that wealth stands one well in hand who has little force of character or intellect, Abraham was instructed, like other careful boys, to get himself a box to drop his money in, and never to spend his change foolishly on holidays. His love for what is great and

generous being destroyed by his attention being taken up with little things; seeing another so much concerned about him making him overrate his own importance; and being continually anxious about his money and health, soon centring all his thoughts and affections in self; and, with all his painstaking, finding others happier than he, — it was not long before he became a discontented, ill-natured man.

"The other never had the headache in his life; and, fair weather or foul, it mattered little with him. Constitutionally happy, all that he could he turned to enjoyment; and what he could not, he let alone. So much of his happiness came from his health, that he never cared for the more abstract pleasures of the mind; and, with that triumphant, joyous feeling which flows from full blood, he began with looking down upon feeble constitutions, and ended with a contempt for those who suffered under the real afflictions of life. From the same cause, he apparently takes to those who, like himself, are fond of merriment; and really supposes himself to be a kind-hearted, friendly fellow, when in truth he cares nothing about others, only just so far as they serve to make up a part of his own pleasures, and to help on the game of life. Tom is as selfish as Abraham, but not so annoying, because easy-natured. You may think I should allow some praise to this quality of character. There is no need of it. Men will always give it its full due; and as for its opposite, if it does not make its own punishment, the world will lay it on with no sparing hand."

Here our wine was gone, and the last candle was burning in the socket. We took our hats, and, laying our reckoning on the table, walked quietly home to my friend's house. Yours,

A. B.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

O, friendly to the best pursuits of man,
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
Domestic life.

COWPER.

It is for a short part of life only that the world is a wonder and delight to us, and its events so many causes of admiration and joy. The mist of morning soon breaks into little wreaths, and is lost in the air; and the objects which it dressed in new beauties are found to be things of our common notice. It passes off from the earth, and the fairy sea is swallowed up, and the green islands, scattered far and wide over it, are again turned into trees or mountain brushwood.

In early life, we are for ever giving objects the hue that best pleases us, and shaping and enlarging them as suits our imagination. But the time comes when we must look upon the unsightly without changing it, and when the hardness of reality makes us feel that there are things not to be moulded to our fancies. Men and their actions were figured to our minds in extremes. Giants and dwarfs peopled the world, and filled it with deeds of heroic virtue and desperate vice. All that we looked forward to kept our spirits alive, and our imagination found food for our desires. At

one time, we were vainglorious at our victories over magnificent crimes; at another, bearing up firmly against oppression, with the honest and tried.

We come at length into the world, and find men too busy about their own affairs to make those of another their concern, and too careful of themselves to go a tilting for another's rights. Even the bad have a mixture in their character which takes away from it a certain exciting poetic effect, and we at last settle down in the dull conviction, that we are never to behold the splendour of entire virtue, or the reckless energy of unmitigated vice. With this sudden check upon our feelings, we may live in the world disappointed and estranged from it; or become, like others, cold and wise, putting on timidity for caution, and selfishness for prudence, be guarded in speech, and slow in conduct, seeing the wrong, yet afraid of condemning it. Or, shaking ourselves loose from this hypocrisy of life, we may let go with it the virtues it mimics, and, despising the solemn ostent and formalities of society, may break through its restraints, and set its decencies at defiance. Or, too wise to be vicious, and too knowing to be moved, we may look with complacent unconcern upon what we hold to be the errours of the world; forbearing to shake the faith of the religious, because it has its social uses, or to point out the fallacies of a moral code, because it serves to the same end.

The virtuous tendencies of our youth might in this way run to vice, and our early feelings grow cold, were there not in us affections of a quieter nature, resting on objects simple and near at hand, receiving more happiness from one being than from a thousand, and kindling a light within us, making one spot a constant brightness, and secretly cheering us through life.

These affections are our domestic attachments, which are refreshed every morning, and grow daily under a gentle and kindly warmth, making a companionship for what is lonely, at the same time leaving it the distinctness and intenseness of our highest solitary joys. We may suffer the hopes and expectations, which shot up wild and disorderly in our young imaginations, to live about our homes; and leaving them their savour and bright hues, may sort each with its kind, and hedge them round with the close and binding growth of family attachments. It is true, that this reality has a narrower range and an evener surface than the ideal; yet there is a rest, and an assured and virtuous gladness in it, which make an harmonious union of our feelings and our fancies.

Home gives a certain serenity to the mind, so that everything is well defined and in a clear atmosphere, and the lesser beauties brought out to rejoice in the pure glow which floats over and beneath them from the earth and sky. In this state of mind afflictions come to us chastened; and if the wrongs of the world cross us in our door-path, we put them aside without anger. Vices are about us, not to lure us away or make us morose, but to remind us of our frailty and keep down our pride. We are put into a right relation with the world; neither holding it in proud scorn, like the solitary man, nor being carried along by shifting and hurried feelings, and vague and careless notions of things, like the world's man. We do not take novelty for improvement, or set up vogue for a rule of conduct; neither do we despair, as if all great virtues had departed with the years gone by, though we see new vices, frailties, and follies taking growth in the very light which is spreading over the earth.

Our safest way of coming into communion with mankind is through our own household. For there our sorrow and regret at the failings of the bad are in proportion to our love, while our familiar intercourse with the good has a secretly assimilating influence upon our characters. The domestic man has an independence of thought which puts him at ease in society, and a cheerfulness and benevolence of feeling which seem to ray out from him, and to diffuse a pleasurable sense over those near him, like a soft, bright day. As domestic life strengthens a man's virtue, so does it help to a sound judgement and a right balancing of things, and gives an integrity and propriety to the whole character. God, in his goodness, has ordained that virtue should make its own enjoyment, and that wherever a vice or frailty is rooted out, something should spring up to be a beauty and delight in its stead. But a man of a character rightly cast has pleasures at home, which, though fitted to his highest nature, are common to him as his daily food; and he moves about his house under a continued sense of them, and is happy almost without heeding it.

Women have been called angels, in love-tales and sonnets, till we have almost learned to think of angels as little better than women. Yet a man who knows a woman thoroughly, and loves her truly, — and there are women who may be so known and loved, — will find, after a few years, that his relish for the grosser pleasures is lessened, and that he has grown into a fondness for the intellectual and refined without an effort, and almost unawares. He has been led on to virtue through his pleasures; and the delights of the eye, and the gentle play of that passion which is the most inward and romantic in our nature, and which

keeps much of its character amidst the concerns of life, have held him in a kind of spiritualized existence: he shares his very being with one who, a creature of this world and with something of the world's frailties, is

"yet a Spirit still, and bright,
With something of an angel light."

With all the sincerity of a companionship of feeling, cares, sorrows, and enjoyments, her presence is as the presence of a purer being, and there is that in her nature which seems to bring him nearer to a better world. She is, as it were, linked to angels, and in his exalted moments he feels himself held by the same tie.

In the ordinary affairs of life, a woman has a greater influence over those near her than a man. While our feelings are, for the most part, as retired as anchorites, hers are in play before us. We hear them in her varying voice; we see them in the beautiful and harmonious undulations of her movements, in the quick-shifting hues of her face, in her eye, glad and bright, then fond and suffused; her frame is alive and active with what is at her heart, and all the outward form speaks. She seems of a finer mould than we, and cast in a form of beauty, which, like all beauty, acts with a moral influence upon our hearts; and as she moves about us, we feel a movement within which rises and spreads gently over us, harmonizing us with her own. — And can any man listen to this, — can his eye, day after day, rest upon this, and he not be touched by it, and made better?

The dignity of a woman has its peculiar character; it awes more than that of man. His is more physical, bearing itself up with an energy of courage which we may brave, or a strength which we may struggle

against; he is his own avenger, and we may stand the brunt. A woman's has nothing of this force in it; it is of a higher quality, and too delicate for mortal touch.

There is a propriety, too, in a woman's mind, a kind of instinctive judgement, which leads us along in a right way, and that so gently, and by such a continuous run of little circumstances, that we are hardly conscious we are not going on in our own course. She helps to cure our weaknesses better than man, because she sees them quicker, because we are more ready to lay open to her those which are hid, and because advice comes from her without its air of superiority, and reproof without its harshness.

Men who feel deeply show little of their deepest feelings to each other. But, aside from the close union and common interests and concerns between husband and wife, a woman seems to be a creature peculiarly ordained for a man to open his heart to and share its joys with, and to be a comforter to his griefs. Her voice soothes us like music; she is our light in gloom and our sun in a cold world. In time of affliction she does not come to us like man, who lays by, for the hour, his proper nature to give us relief. She ministers to us with a hand so gentle, and speaks in a voice so calm and kind, and her very being is so much in all she does, that she seems at the moment as one born only for the healing of our sorrows, and for a rest to our cares. The man to whom such a being is sent for comfort and support must be sadly hard and depraved, if he does not feel his inward disturbance sinking away, and a quietude stealing through his frame.

The relations of parents and children are the most sacred in our lives; and there are no pleasures, or cares,

or thoughts, connected with this world, which remind us so soon of a future. The helpless infancy of children sets our own death before us, when they will be left to a world to which we would not trust ourselves; and the thought of the character they may take in after life brings with it the question, what awaits them in another. Though there is a melancholy in this, its seriousness has a religious tendency. And the responsibility which a man has laid himself under begets a resoluteness of character, a sense that this world was not made to idle in, and a feeling of dignity that he is acting for a great end. How heavily does one toil who labours only for himself, and how is he cast down by the thought of what a worthless creature it is all for!

We have heard of the sameness of domestic life. He must have a dull head and dry heart who grows weary of it. A man who moralizes feelingly, and has a proneness to see a beauty and fitness in all God's works, may find daily food for his mind even in an infant. In its innocent sleep, when it seems like some blessed thing dropped from the clouds, with tints so delicate, and with its peaceful breathings, we can hardly think of it as of mortal mould, it looks so like a pure spirit made visible for our delight.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy," says Wordsworth. And who of us, that is not so over-good as to be unconscious of vice, has not felt rebuked and humbled under the clear and open countenance of a child? — who that has not felt his impurities foul upon him in the presence of a sinless child? These feelings make the best lesson that can be taught a man; and tell him, in a way which all he has read or heard never could, how paltry is the mere intellect compared with a pure and good heart. He that will humble himself,

and go to a child for instruction, will come away a wiser man.

If children can make us wiser, they surely can make us better. There is no one more to be envied than a good-natured man watching the workings of children's minds, or overlooking their play. Their eagerness, curious about everything, making out by a quick imagination what they see but a part of,—their fanciful combinations and magic inventions, creating out of ordinary circumstances, and the common things which surround them, strange events and little ideal worlds, and these all working in mystery to form matured thought,—are study enough for the most acute minds, and should teach us, also, not too officiously to regulate what we so little understand. The still musing and deep abstraction in which they sometimes sit, affect us as a playful mockery of older heads. These little philosophers have no foolish system, with all its pride and jargon, confusing their brains. Theirs is the natural movement of the soul, intense with new life and busy after truth, working to some purpose, though without noise.

When children are lying about seemingly idle and dull, we, who have become case-hardened by time and satiety, forget that they are all sensation, that their outstretched bodies are drinking in from the common sun and air, that every sound is taken note of by the ear, that every floating shadow and passing form comes and touches at the sleepy eye, and that the little circumstances and the material world about them make their best school, and will be the instructers and formers of their characters for life.

And it is delightful to look on and see how busily the whole acts, with its countless parts fitted to each

other and moving in harmony. There are none of us who have stolen softly behind a child when labouring in a sunny corner, digging a Lilliputian well, or fencing in a six-inch barn-yard, and listened to his soliloquies and his dialogues with some imaginary being, without our hearts being touched by it. Nor have we observed the flush which crossed his face when finding himself betrayed, without seeing in it the delicacy and propriety of the after man.

A man may have many vices upon him, and have walked long in a bad course; yet if he has a love of children, and can take pleasure in their talk and play, there is something still left in him to act upon, — something which can love simplicity and truth. I have seen one, in whom some low vice had become a habit, make himself the plaything of a set of riotous children with as much delight in his countenance as if nothing but goodness had ever been expressed in it; and I have felt as much of sympathy and kindness toward him, as I have of dislike and misgiving toward another who has gone through life with all due propriety, but with that cold and supercilious bearing towards children which makes them shrinking and still. I have known one like the latter attempt, with uncouth condescension, to court an open-hearted child, who would draw back with an instinctive aversion; and I have felt as if there were a curse upon him. Better to be driven out from among men, than to be disliked of children.

When my heart has been full of gladness and good-will at the thought of the blessings of home, and at the remembrance that the little which is right within me was learned there, — when I have reflected upon the nature of my enjoyments abroad, and cast them up, and found them so few, and have then turned home

again, and have seen that its pleasures were my best lessons of virtue, and as countless as good, — I have thought that I could talk of it for ever. It is not so. Though the feeling of home never wearies, because kind offices and the thousand little ways in which home attachments are always uttering themselves keep it fresh and full in its course, yet the feeling itself, and that which feeds it, have a simplicity and unity of character of which little is to be told, though they are always with us.

It may be thought that something should be said of the influence of domestic associations on a child, and on its filial attachments. I would not overcast the serenity I now feel by calling up the days when I was a boy, when the spirits were unbroken and the heart pure, when the past was unheeded, and the future bright. I would not do this, to be pained with all that has gone amiss in my latter days, — to remember how poorly I have borne the ills of life, and how thankless has been my spirit for its good.

It is needless to talk of the afflictions of domestic life. Those which Providence sends come for our good, and their best consolations are found in the abode into which they enter. Of the troubles which we make to ourselves, we have no right to complain. Ill-sorted marriages will hardly bring agreement, and from those of convenience will hardly come love. But when the deep and tranquil enjoyment, the light and playful cheerfulness, the exaltation of feeling, and the clear calm of thought, which belong to those who know each other entirely, and have by nature something of the romance of love in them, are all told, then will I speak of the troubles of home

MUSINGS.

A steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning.

He sat, — and talked
With winged messengers; who daily brought
To his small Island in the ethereal deep
Tidings of joy and love.

Then, my Spirit was entranced
With joy exalted to beatitude;
The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,
And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with light,
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence.

WORDSWORTH.

HAVE we looked upon the earth so long, only to reckon how many men and beasts it can maintain, and to see to what account its timber may be turned, and to what uses its rocks and waters may be put? Do we, with Baillie Jarvie, think it a pity that so much good soil should lie waste under a useless lake, and set against the cost of draining the in-comings of the crops? Have we lived so many years in the world, and been familiar with its affairs, only to part off men into professions and trades, and to tell the due proportions required to stock each? Must we for ever travel the straight-forward, turnpike road of business, and

never be left to take the way that winds round the meadows, and leads us sociably by the doors of retired farms? Must the hills all be levelled, and hollows filled up, that we may go like draught-horses the dull and even road of labour the easier and with the more speed? May we not sit awhile to cool and rest ourselves in the shade of some shut-in valley, with its talking rills and fresh and silent water-plants, — or pass over the free and lit hill-tops, catching views of the broad, open country, alive with the universal growth of things, and guarded with its band of mountains resting in the distance like patriarchs of the earth? Must all we do and all we think about have reference to the useful, while that alone is considered useful which is tangible, present gain? Is it for food, and raiment, and shelter alone, that we came into the world? Do we talk of our souls, and live as if we, and all that surrounded us, were made up of nothing else but dull matter? Are the relations of life for our convenience merely, and has the fulfilling of their duties none but promised and distant rewards?

Man has another and higher nature even here; and the spirit within him finds an answering spirit in everything that grows, and affectionate relations, not only with his fellow-man, but with the commonest things that lie scattered about the earth.

To the man of fine feeling, and deep and delicate and creative thought, there is nothing in nature which appears only as so much substance and form, nor any connections in life which do not reach beyond their immediate and obvious purposes. Our attachments to each other are not felt by him merely as habits of the mind given to it by the customs of life; nor does he hold them to be only as the goods of this world,

and the loss of them as merely turning him forth an outcast from the social state; but they are a part of his joyous being, and to have them torn from him is taking from his very nature.

Life, indeed, with him, in all its connections and concerns, has an ideal and spiritual character, which, while it loses nothing of the definiteness of reality, is ever suggesting thoughts, taking new relations, and peopling and giving action to the imagination. All that the eye falls upon and all that touches the heart run off into airy distance, and regions into which the sight stretches are not alive and bright and beautiful with countless shapings and fair hues of the gladdened fancy. From kind acts and gentle words and fond looks there spring hosts many and glorious as Milton's angels; and heavenly deeds are done, and unearthly voices heard, and forms and faces, graceful and lovely as Uriel's, are seen in the noonday sun. What would only have given pleasure for the time to another, or, at most, be now and then called up in his memory, in the man of feeling and imagination lays by its particular and short-lived and irregular nature, and puts on the garments of spiritual beings, and takes the everlasting nature of the soul. The ordinary acts which spring from the good-will of social life take up their dwelling within him and mingle with his sentiment, forming a little society in his mind, going on in harmony with its generous enterprises, its friendly labours, and tasteful pursuits. They undergo a change, becoming a portion of him, making a part of his secret joy and melancholy, and wandering at large among his far-off thoughts. All that his mind falls in with, it sweeps along in its deep, and swift, and continuous flow, and bears

onward with the multitude that fill its shoreless and living sea.

So universal is this operation in such a man, and so instantly does it act upon whatever he is concerned about, that a double process is going on within him, and he lives, as it were, a two-fold life. Is he, for instance, talking with you about a Northwest Passage, he is looking far off at the ice-islands, with their turreted castles and fairy towns, or at the penguin, at the southern pole, pecking the rotting seaweed on which she has lighted, or he is listening to her distant and lonely cry within the cold and barren tracts of ice, — yet all the while he reasons as ingeniously and wisely as you. His attachments do not grow about a changeless and tiring object; but be it filial reverence, Abraham is seen sitting at the door of his tent, and the earth is one green pasture for flocks and herds; or be it love, she who is dear to him is seen in a thousand imaginary changes of situation, and new incidents are happening, delighting his mind with all the distinctness and sincerity of truth. So that while he is in the midst of men, and doing his part in the affairs of the world, his spirit has called up a fairy vision, and he is walking in a lovely dream. It is round about him in his sorrows for a consolation; and out of the gloom of his affliction he looks forth upon an horizon touched with a gentle, morning twilight, and growing brighter to his gaze. Through pain and poverty and the world's neglect, when men look cold upon him and his friends are gone, he has where to rest a tired spirit that others know not of, and healings for a wounded mind which others can never feel.

And who is of so hard a nature that he would deny him these? If there are assuagings for his spirit which

are never ministered to other men, it has tortures and griefs and a fearful melancholy which need them more. He brought into the world passions deep and strong, senses tremulous and thrilling at every touch, feelings delicate and shy, yet affectionate and warm, and an ardent and romantic mind. He has dwelt upon the refinements and virtues of our nature, till they have almost become beauties sensible to the mortal eye, and to worship them he has thought could hardly be idolatry.

And what does he find in the world? Perhaps, in all the multitude, he meets a mind or two which answer to his own; but through the crowd, where he looks for the free play of noble passions, he finds men eager after gain or vulgar distinctions, hardening the heart with avarice, or making it proud and reckless with ambition. Does he speak with an honest indignation against oppression and trick? He is met by loose doubts and shallow speculations, or teasing questions as to right and wrong. Are the weak to be defended, or strong opposed? One man has his place yet to reach, and another his to maintain, and why should they put all at stake? Are others at work in a good cause? They are so little scrupulous about means, so bustling and ostentatious and full of self, so wrapped about in solemn vanity, that he is ready to turn from them and their cause in disgust. There is so little of nature and sincerity, of ardour and sentiment of character, such a dulness of perception, such a want of that enthusiasm for all that is great and lovely and true, (which, while it makes us forgetful of ourselves, brings with it our highest enjoyments,) such an offensive show and talk of factitious sensibility, — that the current of his feelings is checked; he turns away depressed and

disappointed, and becomes shut up in himself; and he, whose mind is all emotion, and who loves with a depth of feeling that few have ever sounded, is pointed at, as he stands aloof from men, as a creature cold, selfish, and reserved.

But if manner too often goes for character, hard-learned rules for native taste, fastidiousness for refinement, ostentation for dignity, cunning for wisdom, timidity for prudence, and nervous affections for tenderness of heart, — if the order of nature is so much reversed, and semblance so often takes precedence of truth, yet it is not so in all things, nor wholly so in any. The cruel and ambitious have touches of pity and remorse, and good affections are mingled with our frailties. Amid the press of selfish aims, generous ardour is seen lighting up; and in the tumultuous and heedless bustle of the world, we here and there meet with quiet and deep affections and considerate thought. Patient endurance of sufferings, bold resistance of power, forgiveness of injuries, hard-tried and faithful friendship, and self-sacrificing love, are seen in beautiful relief over the flat uniformity of life, or stand out in steady and bright grandeur in the midst of the dark deeds of men. And then, again, the vices of our nature are sometimes revealed with a violence of passion and an intellectual energy, which fasten on the imagination of a creative and high mind, while they call out opposing virtues to pass before it in visions of glory: for "there is a soul of goodness in things evil"; and the crimes of men have brought forth deeds of heroism and sustaining faith, that have made our rapt fancies but gatherings from the world we live in.

And there are beautiful souls, too, in the world, to hold kindred with a man of a feeling and refined mind;

and there are delicate and warm and simple affections, that now and then meet him on his way, and enter silently into his heart, like blessings. Here and there, on the road, go with him for a time some who call to mind the images of his soul, — a voice, or a look, is a remembrancer of past visions, and breaks out upon him like openings through the clouds; and the distant beings of his imagination seem walking by his side, and the changing and unsubstantial creatures of the brain put on body and life. In such moments his fancies are turned to realities, and over the real the lights of his mind shift and play; his imagination shines out warm upon it, and it changes, and takes the airiness of fairy life.

When such a one turns away from men, and is left alone in silent communion with nature and his own thoughts, and there are no bonds on the movements of the feelings, and nothing on which he would shut his eyes, but God's own hand has made all before him as it is, he feels his spirit opening upon a new existence, becoming as broad as the sun and air, as various as the earth over which it spreads itself, and touched with that love which God has imaged in all he has formed. His senses take a quicker life, and become one refined and exquisite emotion; and the etherealized body is made, as it were, a spirit in bliss. His soul grows stronger and more active within him, as he sees life intense and working throughout nature; and that which is passing away links itself with the eternal, when he finds new life beginning even with decay, and hastening to put forth in some other form of beauty, and become a sharer in some new delight. His spirit is ever awake with happy sensations, and cheerful and innocent and easy thoughts. Soul and body are blend-

ing into one; the senses and thoughts mix in one delight; he sees a universe of order and beauty, and joy and life, of which he becomes a part, and finds himself carried along in the eternal going-on of nature. Sudden and short-lived passions of men take no hold upon him; for he has sat in silent thought by the roar and hurry of the stream, which has rushed on from the beginning of things; and he is quiet in the tumult of the multitude, for he has watched the tracery of leaves playing safely over the foam.

The innocent face of nature gives him an open and fair mind; pain and death seem passing away, for all about him is cheerful and in its spring. His virtues are not taught him as lessons, but are shed upon him and enter into him like the light and warmth of the sun; and amidst the variety of the earth he sees a fitness which frees him from the formalities of rule, and lets him abroad to find a pleasure in all things, and order becomes a simple feeling of the soul.

Religion, to such a one, has thoughts and visions and sensations tinged, as it were, with a brighter light than falls on other men. The love and reverence of the Creator make their abode in his imagination, and he gathers about them earth and air and ideal worlds. His heart is made glad with the perfectness in the works of God, when he considers that even of the multitude of things that are growing up and decaying, and of those which have come and gone, on which the eye of man has never rested, each was as fair and complete as if made to live for ever for our instruction and delight.

Freedom and order, and beauty and grandeur, are in accordance in his mind, and give largeness and height to his thoughts; he moves among the bright

clouds; he wanders away into the measureless depths of the stars, and is touched by the fire with which God has lighted them. All that is made partakes of the eternal, and religion becomes a perpetual delight.

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